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## FOREBODING IN AUGUST

Sit with me here on the curb of the bridge  
Where the road spans the water  
And the sound of its babble steals afar through the night.  
Do you not hear the throb in antiphonal chorus  
That beats from the wood to the hills  
And back from the hills to the wood?  
Let us dare to forget in the flush of mid-summer  
That life can be other than glorious as Spica,  
That soon yonder diamonded Scorpion will pale  
To a cluster of pearls on the breast of the night.  
Let us clasp our arms silently each about other;  
Let us press cheek to cheek; let our lips draw together  
And hold us for one fleeting moment.  
For did you not feel it?—  
That chill in the air, that foreboding of autumn?  
Let us dare to draw closer together,  
To forget the strange sheen that to-morrow will show me  
Of star dust and light in your beautiful hair.  
Let us forget that my eyes will be dimmer,  
That life has bound thorns to our temples  
And crowned us with grief.  
Why should we remember to-night that in this we call *love*  
Is more bitter than sweet?  
Just this once let us desperately cling to each other.  
What matters the pain for to-night, my beloved?  
If the tears fall, let them fall.  
We shall not feel their sting on the glow of our cheeks.

CARY F. JACOB.

### "ABEUNT STUDIA . . ."

Perhaps the first expression of the aim of study which the growing student comes upon—even before he tries to phrase for himself the purpose of his labor—is that of Francis Bacon, Lord Verulam. Who does not recall that studies serve for delight, for ornament, and for ability? that reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man, and writing an exact man? Long before corrective exercises were planned by physical directors in our institutions of learning, Bacon wrote his list of corrective mental exercises, feeling sure that studies develop into habits—*abeunt studia in mores*. In *The Advancement of Learning*, he translates the phrase: "studies have an influence and operation upon the manners of those conversant in them"—and while we must bear in mind the distinction between "manners" and "habits", and perhaps of "study" as conceived by Bacon in contrast to the conception of the modern undergraduate, the phrase is worthy of consideration at a time when so much emphasis is being put upon education.

Were one to question an average college class on this point, attempting to discover just how far they are aware of the development of studies into habits, the smiles with which his inquiry would be received might make him ponder on the value of a college course. Sophomores are not always aware of the delight to be found in study—even of *belles-lettres*; it may be wondered if whatever ornament such study (or, indeed, any study) may give in this day and age does not come rather from the latest novel than from a knowledge of the classical productions of our literature. The art of hiding art is widely practised by the artless younger generation. And the only contribution of studies to ability of which our student is acutely aware is closely connected with the examinations of the immediate future. Indeed, can we older students often show a direct connection between our study—or even our reading—and the habits we have formed? Much as we should like to think so, can we feel certain that *abeunt studia in mores*?

One sometimes feels that the lessons which stay by us the

longest are the lessons we learn when we are not conscious of learning. Habits of promptness may be formed if one has to get his papers in on time; undoubtedly habits of accuracy are developed in the course of preparing a thesis, or in translating from a foreign tongue; habits of clear thinking should be nurtured by courses in logic, in mathematics, and perhaps in English composition, which should also teach the student the values of words. "If a man's wit be wandering, let him study the mathematics . . . ; if his wit be not apt to distinguish and find differences, let him study the schoolmen, for they are *cymini sectores*; if he be not apt to beat over matters and to call up one thing to prove and illustrate another, let him study the lawyer's cases."

Once out of college and in the professional schools, the student is more keenly aware of the connection between his studies and ability. The impecunious student in college, who hopes to derive his daily bread at least in part from his studies, takes them more seriously than does the academic butterfly; and it is one of the teacher's hardest tasks to arouse an interest in his subject in the minds of such happy-go-lucky insects as are drawn to the academic groves by the hope of finding there honey in the shape of social advantages. One occasionally wonders if even fifty per cent of our students come to college with a primary interest in their studies. Surely many come because their fathers went, or their friends are going, or because it is "the thing to do," or because they do not want to admit, in after life, that they have no affiliation with any institution of higher learning. Bacon presupposes a desire on the part of the student to learn; and if this desire is present, it is quite likely that his studies will develop into habits; but if it is not present——?

The obvious thing to do, in the latter case, is to drop the student from the college roll. Often this is done; but colleges dislike to think of an illiterate plutocracy. The only son of the town magnate goes home in scholastic disgrace; and perhaps there is a danger that the lack of scholarship will develop into bad habits. . . . If it does, the unthinking blame the colleges.

Parents sometimes feel so sure that studies develop into

habits that they are quite angry if such a book as Russell's *What I Believe* is put into their children's hands; and so-called "liberal" teachers draw parental ire on the college for inculcating ideas which are startling, to say the least. But the family might spare itself its emotion if it realizes that in teaching students to think, both sides of a question must be examined; that propagandists—on whichever side of a question they stand—do not convince the alert student, and that the other kind will probably not be affected either way by what they hear or read.

Bacon does not claim that study will make the student morally better, though this possibility is implied in Ovid's phrase. There are college graduates in our prisons, as there are men who have never been to college in our pulpits; but we generally assume that those who have had the "advantages of education" will be not only intellectually but morally fitted to be our leaders. If studies develop into habits, this should surely be the case; one may wonder if it were in Bacon's own career. . . . How many of the graduates of our colleges feel that their degree carries with it a moral obligation?—unless, of course, the degree is that of a theological seminary. "It is," says Portia, "a good divine that follows his own instructions; I can easier teach twenty what were good to be done, than be one of the twenty to follow mine own teaching. The brain may devise laws for the blood, but a hot temper leaps o'er a cold decree; such a hare is madness the youth, to skip o'er the meshes of good council the cripple." From early times, playwrights and novelists have tried to teach—even delightfully, as Sir Philip Sidney expressed the aim of literature—and their lessons have been duly swallowed, sugar coat and all, by succeeding generations; but has the unhappy fate of the villain kept reader or spectator from villainy? It is a negative virtue that the critic allowed *Tom Jones*, when he said that the book would never send a young fellow to the devil if he were not already headed that way.

If the study of literature helps us to interpret life, so the knowledge of life helps us to appreciate literature. Unfortunately, perhaps, the average undergraduate has not had enough



knowledge of life to appreciate fully all the masterpieces he is called upon to read—and sometimes he even takes a dislike to some master to whom he has been brought prematurely, and never goes back to him when later experience would have developed a fuller appreciation. On the other hand, many of us, finding ourselves in a situation we have hitherto been familiar with only in novels, base our behavior (perhaps unconsciously) on that of our favorite hero or heroine. But Bacon does not say that reading develops into behavior—and such situations rarely occur.

*Abeunt studia in mores*—studies develop into habits—of thought; perhaps that is all that Bacon really meant, after all. And insofar as such habits of thought deal with moral questions, studies—even those outside the classroom—affect them. In the day of the Fundamentalist, the Prohibitionist, and the Ku Klux Klan, we could wish that some studies had been deeper, for the true scholar—he who sees more than one side of a question—is tolerant, not with the "tolerance" of the reformer, who seeks freedom to express only his view, but with the wider tolerance which will listen to the other side. If it is true that studies develop into habits, then the habits we have are the result of our studies—be they superficial or profound; and the profounder they are, the more real tolerance we shall develop.

ROBERT WITHINGTON.

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## I REDISCOVER LITERATURE

I rediscovered it in America, for my English upbringing had followed strictly conservative lines, and it had never occurred to me to be on everyday terms with the people in literature. They lived in a dim religious light, very like the light in the drawing-room at home, and remote from the ordinary things of life as the eggshell-china of the drawing-room was from kitchen earthenware.

Into both drawing-room and literature my approach had been decorous. Anything feminine in books I accepted as a "damsel" or a "faire ladye" or a "mayden", at least; the heroes went on "quests" and "ventures perilous" entirely different from ordinary people's travels or mere journeys. In fact I expected of literature

Forests and enchantments drear,  
Where more is meant than meets the ear.

Our favorite performances, when we could collect an audience to watch them, were aloof dramas called "Masques"; which meant that we were nymphs and spirits and shepherds and elements, and spoke an aloof masque-language. We found it hard to forgive an anxious grandmother in the audience on one of these occasions when she interrupted our, "Come, let us hie us to the spring for a pitcher of water," by calling out, "No, you musn't go without shoes and stockings on. I'll get the water for you." We resented bitterly the intrusion of practical details into our Arcadia.

Even for *Swiss Family Robinson* we had the same reverent approach. Acting Swiss Family was sacred to Christmas and holidays and was performed with seriousness all over the house.

"Lo, father, I Fritz have found a banyan tree in yon cave."  
"Good, my son, here is a banyan for thee as recompense."

With school and Cambridge the dim religious light remained just the same. When I wrote my quota of verses I made "bowers" rhyme with "flowers", and the inevitable "'tis dawn" matched the swain sporting on the "lawn". I had no qualm at

using words detached from ordinary life. Words like these were the fit and proper diction—they belonged to literature. Somehow they formed the

Magic casements opening on the foam  
Of perilous seas in faery lands forlorn.

And assuredly it would never have occurred to me to call the "magic casements" plain windows.

But when I came to America I was startled into a new attention. The first shock came when I read in a freshman theme on *Adam Bede*: "At Arthur Dinnithorpe's birthday-party there was supper, followed by dancing by members of the younger set." At once the whole Bede family leapt from the pages and took shape as moderns.—Adam himself turned into a rather unsatisfactory date; Hetty I placed as one of the town's most popular débutantes; and as for the whole ceremony, it would of course be written up in the local paper as a charming affair at the Dinnithorpe's country home. I realized apologetically how much I had been a slave to cautious inkhorn terms in my own school papers, when I had relegated Adam Bede and Hetty to a sort of half-life in a shadowy realm with the "faire ladies" and the "bowers".

The process of awakening continued when I read some sophomore interpretations of the Cavalier Lyrists. Lovelace's

became  
And Carew's  
Tell me not, sweet, I am unkind,  
In this he's telling his lady-love goodbye.  
Ask me no more where Jove bestows  
When June is past the fading rose,

was interpreted

He says in this everything has gone to make his girl.

Sir Roger de Coverley and the proud widow were subjected to the same casual treatment: "Sir Roger liked society well enough until his sweetheart threw him over." Somehow, after that, even eighteenth-century brocade lost something of its stiffness for me.

I thought of the respectful terminology I had used in my

Cambridge term-papers for these "girls", and "lady-loves", and "sweethearts". I had made the mediæval knight "succour fair maidens", the Elizabethan courtier "implore his lady", the seventeenth-century cavalier "flaunt his mistress", the eighteenth-century beau "cajole his Belle".

How aloof it all seemed! But this new friendly treatment offered endless possibilities. Charles Lamb, for instance, "In *Old China*, says when you are poor it is pleasant to figure how you will spend your extra change", and *Cupid and My Campaspe Played at Cards for Kisses* is hailed as "a very cute idea." Hamlet is judged by modern standards and found wanting: "He is the moony type who stands around and does nothing. The trouble with him is that he doesn't adjust himself to circumstances. He ought not to brood on Claudius as his father's murderer, but just think of him as his uncle."

This treatment is not restricted to English literature only. Other figures, more stately yet, are subjected to a modernizing process. "Dante's *Divine Comedy* describes his trip to Heaven and Hell." Menelaus's trip startled me even more; for I had relegated Menelaus to safe security near "the topless towers of Ilium". "Menelaus kept a minotaur. He was off on a trip, and his wife ran away with Paris. He fed the minotaur girls and boys." Romulus and Remus went on a "trip" too, "and after that they returned to their home-town Rome."

There was something appealing in those trips and those returns. The very word "trip" conjures up for me all the comfortable solidity of parlor cars and conductors, colored porters and Round-Trip tickets to be validated. And then at the end, the "home-town Rome" with its Main Street and pool-room and drug-stores, and the "younger set" at the station ready with a welcome for the returning natives. I liked the new idea much better than my own mental picture of a Rome that was a dreary collection of forums, capitols, quæstors, and roads,—all existing in order to be declined.

The classic gods and heroes are not approached warily on Olympus, but are treated sympathetically too. "Psyche's sisters wanted to see Cupid. They thought he would fall for them." Paris, of course, "was judge in a Beauty Contest and

gave an apple as a prize," and Minerva "was jealous of Arachne, so had a sewing match with her."

I must admit that there is one rediscovery that did at first startle my shelf of literary deities, and that is the Esther episode: "No one dared to go in to King Ahasuerus, but Esther took the chance, and she asked him to eat lunch with her." Esther still disturbs me. Cherished if entangled impressions of myrrh and frankincense, locusts and wild honey, hover over her table, but in vain. For I have gnawing doubts about the menu at that famous luncheon-party. When Esther comes before me, a maid fair and beautiful, in royal apparel, I look at her askance, for I know that she must have served ice-cream and grape-fruit, and chicken-salad, perhaps. Sometimes I even fear that after the meal she passed around chewing-gum.

Yet such is my enthusiasm at my rediscovery that even Esther will not trouble me long. For the thing I hail as joyful in all this is the joyful assumption that literature has not a capital L after all, but is linked with the life of everyday. I admit that this assumption does lead to some misconceptions. The 'Dan' of Dan Chaucer, for instance, is not allowed to be an elusive label of quaint mediævalism, but is interpreted as Daniel Chaucer. And the first time I saw Thomas R. Becket written, I did not connect him with Canterbury at all, but thought he must be a modern millionaire or senator.

Past inefficient methods of publishing and editing are brought up to date, too. Spenser, for instance, "came up to London to have his books published." *Tottel's Miscellany* is "a magazine to which Wyatt and Surrey contributed"; and the *Globe*, more strangely yet, is "an English newspaper to which Shakespeare largely contributed."

In some of the interpretations this modernizing zeal is hampered by misunderstanding of English terms. The Temple, for instance, causes endless trouble: "Lawyers live in a Holy Place called the Temple." Or, "The House of Fame was originally the quarters where the Knight Templars lived. Later, lawyers lived there, hence many lawyers are associated with the House of Fame." By another interpreter Luke in *Silas Marner* is made "the highest type of country negro",



and Erasmus "a follower of the Free Church with Sheridan."

But in spite of such occasional misfires there is something engaging in the struggle to anchor these vague names and causes to the "familiar matter of to-day."

I have often wondered just what has caused these modern students to accept so casually the stately figures of literature, to approach them with such a complete absence of caution and respect. The modern style of biography has helped, no doubt, but I really think the movie must have had more share still. How, for instance, could one feel that Robin Hood and his merry men belong to an elusive other-world when Douglas Fairbanks has bounded so solidly into a Sherwood-Hollywood grove, and when the ladies of the tournament are so obviously tittering Hollywood gossip through their mediæval veils?

And then there is the levelling power of modern trade. When I first saw caviare on sale in Piggly-Wiggly at ten cents a tin I decided that America really is a democracy. Far away and remote seem the days of merchant-princes bringing loaded caravans from the Orient. Since all the spices, unguents, and ointments of impossible distant lands are accessible to us casually in this cold storage age, and there is no longer a distinction of peacocks's tongues for richman's food and black-bread for poorman's food, surely it is natural that nothing should be "caviare to the general."

So I hail my democratic rediscovery of literature with gratitude, for I have been introduced to the humanism which an optimistic sophomore defines as, "Instead of things being in a stilted form, an attempt was made to have things more human." If I must choose, let me have Dante's trip and the home-town Rome and even Esther's luncheon-party "not in a stilted form."

In exchange I will surrender each relic "dear and yet dearer for its mystery". They can all go,—the magic-casements and the ladies, even the caviare and the stately cargoes.

MILDRED TONGE.

New Orleans.

## ITALIA ÆTERNA

Unlike a woman, a country must be known if we are to love her, her past as well as her present, what we do not see as well as what we see. It is, to be sure, a delight to come upon the wonder unexpectedly, staring with a wild surmise. But that is a melodramatic sensation; and such effects the Master of the Show wherein we play a part must, without pausing in his continuous performance to consider, surely disdain after all his triumphs. For these there were preparations, and we foresaw (though but darkly) what we saw. The highest love, the sages have said, is half a memory; but love for a country is an abstracter process, and to it the past is still more than the present, and memory and dreaming than vision. Even our own country, and no inconsiderable number of beings in it, must not seem to us merely what they are. Truth, it has been said, is sad.

America and Australia, for that matter, Shasta and Popocatepetl, are older than Rome or Babylon (if indeed any one thing be older than another); but the eye swims and loses itself as it gazes into the heavens or over prairie or sea, and approaches a perception of the boundless only as it follows the flight of a bird or a sail, or wanders down an avenue or a colonnade. It craves a foreground, a nearer and a middle distance. So we have more of a feeling for a vast stretch of time when we view the famous ruin, or look upon the waters, still flowing, of Tiber or Bandusia—

flumina nota  
Et fontis sacros.

The Mississippi and the Niagara have rolled or tumbled down, as it were, in the void, unknown, unsung; and a million years are scarcely more to us than a thousand, save as we discern some familiar figure—Cæsar, Alexander, even Nebuchadnezzar—along their course. So Como is older and lovelier to us because of Virgil, who praised it; and the Lake of Garda, because of a poet who not only praised it but dwelt there, grieving for his brother. For only what is human or mortal can touch us, and only what touches us can prompt us to peer beyond.

Here, however, we need not depend on memory quite so much: that is part of the charm of Italy as compared with Palestine. Imagination craves a visible and tangible *point d'appui*: meditation, a point of departure. Bridges and aqueducts—the water that has passed under or through them! Walls and columns, arches and arcades—the shadows that they have cast and lost! And the roads laid by Romans and Carthaginians, Sabines and Volscians, victors and captives, the famous as well as the nameless, and trodden by them—all down into the gulf! What toil—our bones ache at the thought of it—though their days, no doubt, it made not long enough! Towns are perched—in the Middle Ages and Roman times for safety's sake—on the top of mountains, whither and whence everything has, afoot or on muleback, to be carried; and as the archaeologists have discovered, they often stand on remains of an earlier town, and these—oh, our lives' sweetness!—on those of towns earlier still. Layer upon layer, as the human spirit aspires and earth's crust thickens! Even in his time, without our knowledge, Virgil thought of this—and all the more, therefore, we think of it now—as he sang of “the noble cities, the achievement of man's toil, all the towns his handiwork has piled up on steepy crags, and the streams that glide beneath those ancient walls”—

Adde tot egregias urbes operumque laborem,  
Tot congesta manu præruptis oppida saxis  
Fluminaque antiquos subterlabentia muros.

An old wall or tower by a river,—what is more beautiful, or more directly tells the story of man's toil and transitoriness and the long silent lapse of time! Below me a bridge, built, they say, by Hannibal, rears its back, humped high to escape the torrent, over a road, the river having, in mute millennial irony, left it in the lurch. And the terraces, climbing up the hills and mountains like a cyclops' staircase, are faced with stones worn and wasted, themselves turning at last, like (long ago) the hands that cut and laid them, into mould and soil. A bit of the story of time we can make shift to tell for ourselves when the latter end of it has been faltered out by a shattered survivor.

But to Nature what are our centuries and cycles, our fortunes and vicissitudes,—though this may not be easy to believe? The story is still murmuring in our ears, and we see things that are not. And this is the Mincius, still flowing, Vesuvius, still smoking! And these are the Seven Hills—as if to make sure we count them—though with no figures in toga or armor passing up or down! And there to the north is Soracte, snowy as when Horace pointed it out to Thaliarchus! The sun and the moon are no older, the stars have not grown dim. Was it, then, yesterday? Are two thousand years, the glory and the grandeur, and myriads upon myriads of bitter-sweet pilgrimages such as ours,—though each of these was the world and all to the man as he made it—are they but a watch in the night, a tale that is told? What has happened?

What will be forever,  
What was from of old.

Night has followed day and day night, winter has followed summer and summer winter; clouds and shadows have come and gone; the earth has stretched far as the eye could reach and the sky has bent above it. For what are we or the Romans, what are ten thousand years? Time is an illusion, not a current but an eddy, not a river but an abyss.

*Le temps s'en va, le temps s'en va, ma dame,  
Las! le temps non, mais nous, nous en allons.*

Here the mountains and grottoes, the streams and fountains, every rock and every nook and the very winds of heaven bear names, and like the cypress and the poplar, the ilex and the tamarisk, the olive and the almond, the ivy, the laurel, the myrtle, were sacred to some deity or other once, as they are to memory and to poetry now. Here they are, and we could well believe it in the twilight. Man himself and his handiwork continue, as of Nature a part. Statues are still in the gardens—

*Und Marmorbilder stehn und sehn mich an—*

and chapels or shrines (though now not to nymph or Faunus) there or by the wayside. The oxen, with huge horns turned amicably backward or upward, are those we see in ancient

reliefs and paintings; the sails on Lago Maggiore are those of the Roman triremes; the great terra cotta jars on the terrace or by the cottage were not dug up out of the earth. The very child in the street asserting itself, cries "I tell you"—"dico"—exactly like Cicero or Cæsar, a long age ago, as we must still think it, in the Capitol. Nothing changes. 'Potter and clay endure'—and even the form and fashion of pots.

Customs have had time to change and to spare, were they not rooted in the climate and environment, and deeper than that? As in ancient days, people live in the open—in the sun (if they can) in winter, in the shade (as they may) in summer. At noon they still take the siesta, in the cool of the evening still walk the street. It is the street which everybody walks, moreover, not the byways, and when in the house they are at the window (even if about their toilet), as in a Benozzo or a Carpaccio, or peering and beckoning behind the shutter, as in a novella or romance. The tailor and his seamstresses sew by the open door, or, like the shopkeepers at Pompeii, behind a counter even with the pavement.

Something to see, by Bacchus!—

and they have kept even the oath! They themselves would be seen, as well, "ut videant et videantur", as Ovid said of people's going to the theatre. Often, as the stranger in the street raises his eyes, he thinks himself in one—gallery above gallery—or in the lists. He is the actor, he is the wandering knight. People live in flats, in big houses of many storeys, as at the time of Juvenal; and, as then, and for similar reasons, one must needs walk heedfully below. Look might meet look, a rose fall or a handkerchief flutter, and there are direr perils. Of these last my landlord in Rome once warned me, as the Roman of old, in his third satire, does his reader. Ever since such things had been falling—through the Dark and Middle Ages, through the Renaissance—as surely, though not so incessantly, as Tiber flows. Even in the country people are for the most part huddled into villages with only steep and almost sunless alleys in between. It was for safety and company then, it is for company and because of old custom now. They must get together under the



portico or arcade on the piazza to talk, or by the tavern to play at bowls, skittles, or morra.

Their agriculture or other handiwork is changed as little, not only because of the character of the people and the climate, but because of the small scale of the culture and the roughness of the ground. To stones and terraces and a poor couple of acres modern machinery or mass-production cannot adapt itself. The old implements and methods are still in use: the two-toothed mattock (*bidens*), the spade, plough, and scythe, are exactly like those in the reliefs and wall-paintings. And the basins or wells of water on the mountain slopes in Italy and Provence, which feed the worn stone rills and runnels for irrigation, are as old as the terraces themselves. The frogs that I hear singing out of them these April nights melancholy Virgil heard. "Shut off the rills", cries Palæmon at the end of the third Eclogue:—

Claudite iam rivos : sat prata biberunt.

Like these, men's ways generally are the old ways, fit for poetry and linked to it. Their wine and oil are of the hillside; and like Horace, they eat olives and endives and mallows light, garlic too (though without the delicate poet's repenings), as well as artichokes and fennels, and cheese made from the milk of sheep and goats. The diet is of the age of gold, and the life, though not so idle, is as simple. The sower sows by hand and not with a patent drill; the fisherman in the morning spreads his white or vermillion sails like the wings of a bird above the green waters of the bay, but returns to roost at sundown; both wine-press and threshing-floor are literally trodden; and all this work, hard to do though pretty to look at, or at least to write of, is lightened by a song. The husbandman still lops boughs or leaves from trees or hedges, in a land where fodder or fuel may not be wasted, keeping a good heart as in Virgil's time—

Hinc alta sub rupe canet frondator ad auras :

and still the shepherd or goatherd sings or pipes as he carries his crook. Even the carter fairly chants as he whoops and curses at his mules or oxen, for, like the ancient Latin, Italian speech

is from song at no time far removed. The women, too, sing and chatter as they wash, like Nausicaä, and her maidens, by the brook or river, or spin, knit, or make lace by the cottage door. Or bare-foot and barelegged, they carry jars on their heads as in antique friezes, yet are neither proud of their limbs or gait, as they well might be, nor ashamed, as in a weak world (until quite of late) they are expected to be. Their world is older, and untroubled. So, not long since, sat a dark-skinned girl of seventeen, on a stone wall under an ilex, though without roses or vine leaves in her hair. Amaryllis herself, back from Elysium in a frock! It was her look, her voice and speech, and the very place for her too.

What above all makes their life so poetical is the fact that it is rooted in the soil. Our wealth and cheap and rapid transportation have divorced us from it; we were not born where we dwell to-day or shall dwell to-morrow: and our dwellings and cattle, food and garments, manners and speech, have little local character. The Italians for the most part are—despite the migrations demanded by modern industrialism—even as the poplars in Lombardy or the stone pines round about Naples. The very houses, when not stuccoed, look as if they grew out of the rock. The Tuscan drinks his own wine and eats his own bread, and builds his houses in his own way and of the stone at hand, quite differently from Neapolitan or Roman. He has great white oxen while the Roman drives stocky grey ones. The sails in the bay of Genoa are not like those off Venice. But what New York does to-day San Francisco will do to-morrow, and herds of Jerseys or Holsteins are scattered from Maine to Texas. Indiana limestone faces buildings in Philadelphia, and Philadelphia brick, buildings in Indianapolis. Even in Italy the cheapness of readymade clothing has pretty nearly effaced time-honored local differences; yet the peasants still keep sashes, earrings, and footgear, and ways of doing their hair and wearing their whiskers, that the tyranny of fashion or the craving for standardization cannot touch.

In the towns and cities, to be sure, life is not so idyllic and naïve; industry, if not manners, has been modernized. But in places apparently untouched by the spirit of William Morris, I have seen a joiner making a wardrobe with his own hand, and

a smith fashioning a fine iron railing for a balcony. Since the war it is the rich that have changed rather than the poor. One of the glories of Rome used to be the palaces of the princely families (which date back, not to ancient times, indeed, though to the early mediæval); but most of these are now banks or hotels, and the colonnaded and fountained courtyard, where the eye in passing loved to wander and linger, is fenced in and covered, the fountain perhaps made to play (like the orchestra) for a restaurant, and the porter, who reared himself before the entrance with mace, cocked hat, and livery, flung (like so much else, alas!) to the democratic and economic bow-wows. A man with letters on his cap takes his place; men with figures in their heads take his master's. The one or the other, for the matter of that, is taking the places of us all.

Other customs and manners, more personal, are as ancient. Curls and perfumes for men are in France and Italy no degenerate innovation, for by Horace and his followers they are frequently spoken of with complacence. Curls, of various length, abound on the heads of Greek and Roman statues—curls and odors, were they not for the very gods? In themselves both are sweet to the senses, the latter more grateful in lands where (now as then) cleanliness is not next to godliness, and attractiveness and beauty are. At sixteen, even male Englishmen and Americans cultivate flowing locks, and at any age, however ugly their fingers, unblushingly wear rings; but he is true Italian, the hero of Stendhal's *Chartreuse de Parme*, who, wounded in a duel, rushes to the mirror to see if his manly countenance has been marred. Unlike the Egyptian and the Scandinavian gods, the Greek and Roman were not only brave but beautiful. The perfumer and hair-dresser, the photographer and the jeweller, thrive in the most poverty-stricken village; and the young men take eagerly to the recent fashion of going about bareheaded. The Piazza of San Marco, by night or by day, is more like a big ballroom than ever, though now the feminine locks are geometrical, only the masculine flamboyant. Earrings are worn, not only by every female, big or little, rich or poor, but by fishermen and shepherds, as by the later Cæsars, Shakespeare, Sidney, and Raleigh, and the Valois and the Stuart kings. And

the cosmetic arts affected by Italian, French, and Spanish women, and so by women everywhere, are Roman too. Those nearest the state of nature and most blessed with her favors are not fondest of her unamended: their gardens the Italians arrange in alleys and terraces, their strawberries they soak in sherry, and even as they tint their roses they do their ladies—cheek and chin, lips and eyelids, nails and hair. Divine discontent—nothing is more beautiful than either, neither can be beautiful enough.

Old, too, and time-honored must be the Italian inn-keeper's way of mingling with the company in the dining-room and bidding each one welcome, and perhaps clinking glasses with him; for so did hosts in Renaissance England, not only in inns but in palaces, if we are to judge by Henry VIII in fact, and by Macbeth (at the banquet) and Perdita (at the shearers' feast) in fiction. From Rome all roads lead as well as to it. "Good wine needs no bush" is a proverb, not only in England but in Italy—"il buon vino non vuol frasca"; but above many an Italian tavern door it is still needed, as it was in the Middle Ages and probably long before. Men's wearing their hats indoors and at table—lifting them as they enter or leave the dining-room—which is a custom still to be found among the lower classes, is not Roman, of course, but almost. It was done everywhere in the Middle Ages and long after, especially in winter, at a time when houses were not adequately warmed. So it is in Italian, French, and Flemish paintings of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, on the Elizabethan stage, and in classic drama at the *Comédie Française* even to-day. Church and synagogue, bench and bar, senate and consistory—all the most conservative orders or professions still cling mediævally to their headgear when at their functions or mysteries, as do the Italian bourgeois and peasant when at their ease. The Pope on his throne and the Cardinal in the chancel; honorable members in the Commons; judges, barristers, and professors, when in their gowns;—these proudly wear their hats (or the wigs which replace them) like the humblest Dago at his board.

The chief guardian of old Roman customs, however, is the church; for while the law is essentially Roman it presents little to

the eye. Often the pagan faith is contrasted with the Christian as a natural religion, but the Christian is in many ways only a continuation or development of the pagan. It is natural, too; as of old, religious festivals are celebrated as simply and universally as the national. Protestants are shy of the subject of religion, but Catholics, like pagans, speak of it freely, and though morality among them may be separated from religion, life is not. They speak of it even merrily and lightly, like Plautus and Homer, as a Protestant with a good conscience never can. They are at ease in Zion, as are Homer and the gods themselves upon Olympus. Indeed this spirit follows the faith into distant lands—in partes infidelium,—and I know of a pious priest in America who on giving a parishioner at his earnest wish (for he was motoring) a medal of St. Christopher, patron of travellers, added that it was not good for over sixty miles an hour. This continuity is most noticeable, however, in outward form and circumstance. Relics and certain spots on the earth, into or out of which has passed virtue, as wells, tombs, and birth-places, are still revered and kept holy, and temples or chapels are specially built for both. Flowers, incense, and candles are the chief offerings, laid before the very image or picture of the deity. Song and prayer, gesture and genuflection, procession and sacrifice, lustration and fumigation, benediction, malediction, exorcism, and these whether in church, street, or field, are the rites of worship—pagan as Brahmanism, ancient as man's uttermost hopes and fears. The very forms in the breviary for blessing the flocks and crops, and driving away pests—mice, locusts, and the like—are traditional through and through. And in most of these ceremonies the uneven numbers, three and seven, are particularly favored as those wherein the god delights—"numero deus impare gaudet".

The whole conception of the service, among the common people at least, is still that of glorifying or placating the god rather than of edifying the worshippers; and prayer in distress is often with a promise attached. *Vota—voti*, nowadays—are an institution quite unchanged. The suppliant vows a church or chapel, so many candles or masses, or objects of gold or silver, marble or fine needle-work, to the saint, as did the



Roman temples, treasures, or victims to the god; and if need be he bids up a bit. "J'augmente", a charming daughter of Provence once said to me when I asked what she did when her prayer was not heard. And the grateful soul may do better than that, and in recognition of an answer offer the appropriate gift even if it be not vowed. As every traveller knows, the walls of pilgrimage shrines in Italy and Catholic Europe generally are loaded with pictures by the village artist, of dire mischances and miraculous rescues—fires, shipwrecks, runaways, burglaries—or with silver images of the defective or wounded member cured—eye, foot, or hand, but the heart above all,—or with the crutches joyfully discarded. So the poet of Tibur, having escaped the peril of the siren Pyrrha, will, like a rescued mariner, hang up in Neptune's temple his garments and a picture—

Me tabula sacer  
Votiva paries indicat uvida  
Suspendisse potenti  
Vestimenta maris deo.

For like all amorous poets, Horace employs profanely the sacred forms. The religious custom Juvenal mentions in his twelfth satire; and Tibullus, as he prays to Isis, cries "Now aid me, goddess,—that thou canst heal saith a crowd of painted panels in thy temples". Prisoners when freed hung up their chains in the temple of Saturn; warriors, their own swords or those of the vanquished; sea-captains, the tiller or anchor of a wreck. So Lamartine's Geneviève, when she breaks her engagement, "vows" all her betrothal finery upon the altar of the Virgin.

Indeed, for the Italian people their religion is not only thus material and anthropomorphic, but polytheistic: by the wise the saints are supposed merely to intercede but for the multitude they intervene. In time of need it is they who are prayed to and vowed to, not God or the Saviour. Relations with them are more intimate. Every country or town has a patron, every trade or profession, every soul. So Pallas was the guardian of Athens, and Venus of Rome; Mercury, like St. Nicholas, the patron of merchants and travellers; Diana, like St. Hubert, of

hunters; Saturn, of gladiators. And readers of Homer and Virgil need not be reminded that Hera and Athena, Artemis and Apollo, had among individual mortals their special preferences or aversions. The saint nearest in time and place is, moreover, the one most frequented and regarded. Officially St. Peter is the patron of Rome; but practically it is St. Philip Neri, a Roman, not a Hebrew, a modern, not an ancient, and one who has left relatives behind. Even the old-time practice has come down uninterrupted of giving the deity surnames and epithets, which practically results in further multiplication in the Pantheon. Prayers are uttered, and vows registered, and churches and chapels even elsewhere erected, to Our Lady of Loretto, or Santa Maria delle Grazie—dei Miracoli—of the Capitol, as if the saint were not everywhere one and the same. In ancient times it was to Jupiter Stator; Venus Erycina, Paphia, or Pandemos; or Diana of the Ephesians. This god or saint it was that had proved efficacious, not his duplicate or counterpart elsewhere; and the imagination of the people, as of the poet, bestows a local habitation and a name. And at this place, still "at Jerusalem or on this mountain", prayer is of greater potency than at another. There, as in heaven, the god dwells and heeds. A French author of prominence, who recently made the pilgrimage afoot, says that all the common people he talked with on the way begged him to pray for them in Rome.

What is the calendar but pagan, every saint having not only his city, shrine or temple, and special individual devotees, but his day and feast, and all the events and miracles of the passion being annually repeated in mimicry like the magical rites of nature-worship? From the Saturnalia, happy festival of a god come to earth, which occurred in the latter part of December descended the custom of offering presents and good wishes—*bona Saturnalia*!—at Christmas or Twelfth Night; and also the masking and torch-bearing, the merrymaking in disregard of all class distinctions and many of the proprieties, which, through the ages, the Latin peoples continue to revive at Carnival. Lent seems to find its source in the Quinquatrus. And from the Lemuria, the festival in honor of the dead, came those of

All Saints and All Souls, the former of which was originally placed on May 13th, the selfsame day. The *culto dei morti* ("worship of the dead") is too strong an expression, with flowers and lights, as for the gods or saints, is certainly of ancient origin; and the marbles and cypresses of an Italian cemetery are a tender, eerie spectacle through the night. The glow of devotion, the glimmer of memory, visibly lingers on. All in all, a St. Paul or St. Peter planted, with cross and halo, upon a Roman triumphal column, or the consecrated fabric of a church which incorporates Roman capitals or images, is not so incongruous as it seems. Like much else that we have been considering in Italy, the outward is but the inward made manifest, and there, as everywhere, the course of Nature is continuous—*non facit saltum*. Italy embraced Christianity as Christianity, becoming pagan, embraced Italy; and Italy rejected the Reformation because the Reformation rejected what was pagan, Italy and her works.

Not so much pagan and natural as heathen some of these customs and practices may seem, thoroughly superstitious. But superstition is not the greatest shortcoming, and a religion truly popular and national cannot well be without it. Without the material or anthropomorphic, the local or particular, and a rite or ceremony as the avenue of approach, it is abstract, negative, undefined, and therefore for the simple soul hardly a religion at all. But this religion, with a comparatively recent infusion of a deeper emotion, finer ethics, and a more definite doctrine of future happiness or unhappiness, has lasted, not two millenniums, but many. The positive, passionate elements are what is important; and, for all its materialism and superstition, this religion has supported the lives not only of the unnumbered humble and forgotten, but of Cicero and Virgil, of Dante and Giotto, as well as of St. Francis. Even Michelangelo carved crucifixes and painted altar-pieces; and as in his prolonged later years he faced death, he raised and rounded the dome of St. Peter's church without payment, for the repose of his soul. It was he that was paying: his god was not inhuman, unapproachable.

Also many of the sadder and more sombre aspects of the Christian faith and practice were developments from the pagan.

What are nuns but vestal virgins? And for unfaithfulness to their vows they were in the Middle Ages similarly punished, walled up as the vestals were buried alive. Penance was not an invention of the Christian sense of sin. The *dies nefasti* generally were days of purification. In his sixth satire Juvenal satirizes the priest of Bellona much as if he were one of Boccaccio's or Chaucer's friars playing upon the superstitious and expiatory instincts of his flock. "He bids the lady beware of September Siroccos if she do not purify herself with a hundred eggs and present him with some old mulberry-colored, garments, in order that any great unforeseen calamity may pass into the clothes and make expiation for the entire year. In winter she will go down to the river of a morning, break the ice, and plunge three times into the Tiber, dipping her trembling head into its swirling waters; and crawling out thence naked and shivering, she will creep [Luther we remember on the Sacred Stair] with bleeding knees right across the field of Tarquin the proud. If the white Io shall so order, she will journey to the confines of Egypt;"—a pilgrimage, not the first or the last (witness this *anno santo!*) and in days when life itself was not as yet considered one.

The ascetic and gloomy, however, was not from of old the main bent of the Italian spirit, nor, after two thousand years of Christianity, is it now. They shun gloom and flee to the light. Holy days are for them mostly holidays; and Carnival precedes Lent, and the frank merriment and feasting of Easter and Easter Monday follow the fasting and lamentations of Good Friday. To them of old time death was hideous and horrible; the bare mountains, the forest, and the sea, were not only wild but forbidding; melancholy to them was not tender and sweet, and even now the Italians are little affected by either the "metaphysical" or the Romantic spirit. With a purpose ahead they may in affairs be wily and artful, but by inclination they are impulsive and communicative, and in their imaginations open and unclouded as the day. The cypress, straight and tapering as a spire amid the tilting pines and gnarled and twisted figs and olives, cool and dark against the blossoms of peach or almond or by the marble staircase, is for us northerners a rare and par-

ticular delight; but to the ordinary Provençal or Italian it is hateful and ghastly, as it was to Flaccus and his friends:—

All the year long at the villa, nothing to see though you linger,  
Except yon cypress that points like death's lean lifted forefinger.

For us, too, it means death, though not the cemetery; but even so, for our subdued and devious spirits (and for those of some cultivated Italians no doubt as well) it adds a charm of contrast, not only in line and color, but in meaning. We look before and after, and admit the shadow into the picture.

This frankness and directness of the Italian spirit and temper appears (as indeed we have seen already) on every hand. The outward is the sign of the inward, and the inward, hidden in the north, here comes to light. Expression is as necessary to these people as breathing; and as Donne said of his lady, their bodies think, their thoughts are embodied. Their speech is a cry or a song, their attitudes are pictures. Shame is not their prime virtue (nor in Roman times was it), as the Goths and Scythians of to-day indignantly notice in the streets. Silence, quiescence, continence they know not. They have a word, a gesture, a look, and sometimes all three together, for moments when the Anglo-Saxon (he thanks God) has nothing at all. They smile and laugh, sing and go half-naked, stare and comment, and (*chose terrible!*) point, like the children that they are. If a secret is to be kept it will not be, at any rate, by their holding their tongues; and if love be the secret, who can keep it here? In the north, woman, however talkative, is at the supreme moment well-nigh mute, "her whitest arms in silence clinging": the Italian or Provençal maiden, I dare say, twitters and carols like a bird on the bough,—

Verbosa gaudet Venus loquella—

or "laughs with insatiable lips". Of love and laughter together Venus was the goddess. Song and dance then, as in a play or opera, are her natural expression. Unlike Jessica (who was English, little Jewish, and Venetian not at all) she is ever merry when she hears sweet music; and she makes it, too, not only the expressive but the imitative instincts within her being strong. Publicity she would not shun. Bridal pairs in Italy



and France open-heartedly court it, and drive to the Mayor's office and the sanctuary, and then to the photographer's, either in a white carriage—like a child's hearse—or with white ribbons festooned about the coach-man's whip, that they may receive sympathy and homage all the way. In the villages the procession goes afoot, with fiddlers on before. The English or American bride, on the other hand,—until of late—was pale and blushing, sometimes fainted, did not appear in public after the wedding announcement until the moment of the ceremony, and then at once fled away amid strangers, who did not know, and to the bosom of Nature, who neither grins nor winks.

It was in Italy, as we all know, that the Renaissance came about, the discovery again of beauty in the human body—in this mortal world—and the birth of a new courage, not of convictions, but of instincts. Not from afar had it to come; and a natural religion, close to earth and to us who are (bewilderedly, but everlastingly) tethered on it, has its advantages, not in art only but in life. The Vestal Virgins having by the young men been corrupted, the Senate, knowing not what counsel to take, consulted the Sibylline books, and found themselves there bidden to raise a temple to Venus Verticordia, that she might turn the hearts of the youth to virtue. Rather it should have been Diana, many moderns would think, goddess of chastity, or Minerva, dread virgin goddess of wisdom. But not so would think a wise parish priest and confessor even to-day, for all his celibacy, or Cicero, who praised the life *secundum Naturam*. She with success cannot be contradicted, with safety cannot be withstood. Love conquers all, sang the greatest and purest of Latin poets, let us too yield to love,—

Omnia vincit amor: et nos cedamus amori.

Weakness it may seem, but in such weakness is strength, though it be not thought such; only love weans and leads youth away from fleshliness, only the appropriate higher passion from any vice. Will-power represses, inhibits, but not for long, particularly in the South;—there they yield to love, joyfully embrace the life from which is no escaping, and paint pictures and mould statues that are both naked and noble;—and only the

higher passion can envelop and absorb the brute instinct, and thus effectually control it. According to the sweet wisdom of the elder world, in Italy still followed and perhaps remembered, not abstinence but temperance is virtue; and like running water, nature purifies herself. Is it not so, indeed, that through all the animal excesses of the past they as a people have kept their soul—and shared it, to their own and the world's delight?

This, or the like of it, Italians may know or remember, not Italy. It is better so; for a people conscious is still more unpleasant than a person. Yet one thing Italy does remember (here we quit our dreaming and see her as she is), and that is the Empire.\* It is in the newspapers, the proclamations and manifestoes of authorities and parties, the anniversary celebrations, the private talk and public speeches of the leaders. And in none of the allied countries is so much still said of Victory, though in looking, not backward, but ahead. Loaded with taxes, and faced by debts for which she has not yet been taxed, she dreams as the lira crumbles, of power and expansion. Her mission, her place in the sun, her true and sacred confines—all the late dreams of Germany spring and blossom in her bosom afresh, and the lean kine of Machiavelli's counsels devour (if really they ever show their heads) all the fat ones of Bentham and Mr. Norman Angell. With the passion that will have it both ways, Italy, like Germany thinking of the past, calls herself ancient, and like Germany thinking of the future, calls herself new and youthful,—if we may call it thinking. She is, like Germany, fast becoming a cult, being both worshipper and worshipped. A people with a mission—from both it and them, O Lord, we beseech thee to save us! At break of day the fascisti pull on their shirts and raise the chant and ensign. The generalissimo of the Italians bears about with him the title Duke of Victory, their admiral is Duke of the Sea. *Re Vittorioso* (with an exultant pun upon his name) is everywhere the legend under the king's picture. In his fantastic temple of victory, on

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\* The present article, as the reader will of himself have observed was written nearly two years ago. Since then Italy has given still other signs of this aspiring, not to say menacing, spirit.

the Lago di Garda, their poet, who for a moment held Fiume against the world, has, with acolytes and satellites, stationed himself to guard the trophies or votive offerings of the war, to feed and fan the sacred fire. But the "altar of the country", as it is called, is the high-piled tomb of Victor Emmanuel II, in the heart of the Eternal City; and the French pilgrim mentioned above, witnessed in the young Italians bowed roundabout it the authentic tokens of patriotic passion and consecrated fervor. It is the tomb of a Saint—like that of Napoleon and of Lenin, Saints not in Heaven. And only the other day, on the occasion of the present king's jubilee, Signor Mussolini (who should know) solemnly declared that "the Italy of to-day, our Italy, the Italy of our generation, is athirst for glory and power." Glory, that word which some people have happily now almost forgotten, still in Italian newspapers, and party manifestoes, and political speeches, abounds. It is not all Italian effervescence and romantic fervor, not all idle word and gesture: "peacefully", the leaders say, "if it may be, if not, by force." Whom the gods would destroy they exalt—from their mission, we beseech Thee, save them! History is not for a people itself, it would seem, German or Italian; the great days, if Italy only knew it, were not those of the Empire; and to gain the whole world (if it can) what shall it profit even a people? What of old did it profit this?

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## THE TALENT OF T. S. ELIOT

Since reading T. S. Eliot's *Whispers of Immortality* and coming upon the line,

"Donne, I suppose, was such another",

following some verses on Webster, I have felt that Eliot himself is such another as Donne. After this thought first struck me, Mr. Richard Aldington remarked the kinship of Eliot with the Elizabethans and strengthened my feeling of his relation to Donne. At length, when I read Donne with Eliot's criticism and poetry in mind, this feeling crystallized into certain observations. And then I saw the justice of Dr. Johnson's remark that no man could be born a metaphysical poet by ringing changes on convention and imitation. For the truth is that Eliot has been so original as to keep us from seeing that he is a true metaphysical poet of the line of John Donne. This explanation is my excuse for analyzing the talent with which Eliot has carried on the tradition of Donne.

T. S. Eliot's debt to the Donne tradition begins with his poetic theory, for the main points of that theory emerge logically from his analysis of Donne. This analysis is found in his review of John Donne and in his essay on the Metaphysical Poets, dealing largely with Donne. In the latter essay Eliot speaks of the necessity, in a various and complex civilization, of a various and complex poetry, and concludes, "Hence we get something which looks very much like the conceit—we get, in fact, a method curiously similar to that of the 'metaphysical poets', similar also in its use of obscure words and of simple phrasing"<sup>1</sup>

This conclusion embraces the main items in the debt which Eliot owes to Donne. This debt will have to be considered in the light of a statement found in Eliot's review of Donne: "Our appreciation of Donne must be an appreciation of what we lack, as well as of what we have in common with him."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>*Homage to John Dryden*, p. 32.    <sup>2</sup>*Nation and Athenæum*, June, 9, 1923.

What we moderns lack Eliot has tried to supply in his poetry; what we have in common with Donne Eliot also has, and this mental kinship will have to be carefully defined.

Again quoting Eliot, "The age objects to the heroic and sublime, and it objects to the simplification and separation of the mental faculties."<sup>3</sup> These are the things we have in common with Donne, and awareness of this kinship prompts Eliot to find the answers Donne found, even if his age was unconscious of the questions. A concrete example of the objection to the heroic and sublime is found in the reappearance in Eliot of the mocking man-of-the-world philosophy of love, such as the *Conversation Galante*, but this is merely a detail. The objection to the simplification and separation of the mental faculties brings us to the first main, and perhaps most important, item in Eliot's debt to Donne. That is his idea of the poetic mind, its method and materials. This idea comes straight out of his analysis of Donne and relates to what Grierson calls "the peculiar blend of passion and thought . . . which is their [the Metaphysical Poets'] greatest achievement."<sup>4</sup>

This idea may be called the unification of sensibility; it is the gist of Grierson's statement and of Eliot's observation that "a direct sensuous apprehension of thought, or a recreation of thought into feeling", is exactly what we find in Donne. Now examination will show this unified sensibility to be the central tenet in the poetic theory expounded in Eliot's essays on Donne and the Metaphysical Poets and also in *The Sacred Wood*. And it is this idea that governs Eliot's poetic method and the range of material found in his poetry.

How profoundly the presence of this unified sensibility in Donne affected his poetry, and how surely the awareness of this secret of Donne has affected Eliot appears as soon as one examines the commonest criticism of the two poets. Both are charged with incorporating too much curious knowledge into their poetry. But this charge could not be made were it not that for them, as Eliot says of Donne, "thought is an intense feeling

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<sup>3</sup> *Nation and Athenæum*. June 9, 1923.

<sup>4</sup> Grierson, *Introduction to Metaphysical Poetry*.



which is one with every other feeling."<sup>5</sup> Probably nothing has influenced Eliot more than his perception that "the poets of the seventeenth century . . . possessed a mechanism of sensibility which could devour any kind of experience."<sup>6</sup> How much this explains the bad taste and difficulty of Donne!

Mr. Desmond MacCarthy,<sup>7</sup> in his studies of the New Poets, voices the common feeling about Eliot when he refers to Eliot's out-of-the-way erudition and learned, oblique, and obscure allusions. These words also find their place under Donne in every literary history. The practice which draws these words was natural and unpremeditated in Donne; in Eliot it has been consciously developed as anyone can see by reading the American edition of his *Poems* backwards, a method which will give their relative chronology.

How Donne could incorporate so much learning in his poetry Eliot further explains when he says of the Metaphysical Poets, and especially of Donne, "their mode of feeling was directly and freshly altered by their reading and thought."<sup>8</sup> This is the passionate thinking which Grierson finds in Donne; it is also the poetic theory which Eliot illustrates in *The Waste Land*, where he gives us the emotional equivalents of a large amount of reading and thinking. For instance, this passage:

I have heard the key  
Turn in the door once and turn once only.  
We think of the key, each in his prison  
Thinking of the key, each confirms a prison  
Only at nightfall, ætherial rumours  
Revive for a moment a broken Coriolanus.

Here we have allusions to Dante and Shakespeare, allusions that have the quality of experiences and a substructure of idealism drawn from Bradley's *Appearance and Reality*. And yet this is the same "direct sensuous apprehension of thought" which Eliot notes in Donne. How implicit the thought is in the feeling may be seen by comparing this passage with Arnold's *Self-Dependence*, where the thought is similar but smaller.

<sup>5</sup> *Nation and Athenæum*, June 9, 1923.

<sup>6</sup> *Homage to John Dryden*, p. 30.

<sup>7</sup> *The New Statesman*, June 8, 1921.

<sup>8</sup> *Homage to John Dryden*, p. 29.

The amount of learning Eliot incorporates in *The Waste Land* is evident upon reading the text or the notes he supplies. His success is not here the question, though it seems to me complete. And how much this method owes to Donne is not less evident in his statement of the needs of modern poetry at the end of his essay on the Metaphysical Poets. There he insists that the modern poet should know more, an insistence obviously inspired by the text of Donne and his school. Compare this insistence with a similar one in "Tradition and the Individual Talent" found in *The Sacred Wood*.

Donne's learning is so well known that I need only point out the similarity of Eliot's knowledge. Eliot also draws upon medicine, law, physics, philosophy, and in his own time upon anthropology. These resemblances in learning are pointed out not as a direct debt, but as the materials which a unified sensibility is able to transmute into poetry. And Eliot, in his essay on Marvell, regards Donne as almost the inventor of a system of feeling that is able "to gather up and to digest into its art all the experience of the human mind". The result of Eliot's perception of this system in Donne is seen in MacCarthy's statement that "Eliot's subject is always the ingredients of the human mind". This unified sensibility is perhaps the chief item in the "method curiously similar to that of the metaphysical poets" which Eliot sees resulting from the needs of modern poetry.

As a guide for further analysis, let me quote Grierson's summary of Donne's technique: "his phrasing and conceits, the metaphysics of mediæval Christianity, his packed verse with its bold, irregular fingering and echoing vowel sounds."<sup>9</sup> This summary comes very close to Eliot's outline of modern technique which I quoted. I shall consider the metaphysics section as included in the matter already discussed; there remain the first and third sections.

Let us consider what, if anything, Eliot owes to Donne's "phrasing and conceits". The colloquial character of Donne's phrasing and diction receives the common support of Gosse,

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<sup>9</sup> Grierson, *Introduction to Metaphysical Poetry*.

Grierson, and Eliot. Gosse says that Donne "arrived at an excess of actuality in style";<sup>10</sup> Grierson sees in Donne's verse and diction the same blend "of the colloquial and the bizarre";<sup>11</sup> Eliot speaks of the "use of obscure words and simple phrasing". Colloquial and bizarre seem just epithets for both the vocabulary and phrasing of Donne, and Eliot is surely characterized by the same epithets. Anyone can see in Eliot the vocabulary of what MacCarthy calls "erudite allusions and crisp colloquialisms". The lines from the second section of *The Waste Land* will illustrate:

Flung their smoke into the laquearia . . .

Now Albert's coming back, make yourself a bit smart.

Or this from *Sunday Morning Service*:

The sapient sutlers of the Lord.

What Eliot owes to Donne in phrasing will come out more clearly in considering the conceit. Eliot's words, "something which looks very much like the conceit", apply strikingly to his own poetry. Both the expanded and the condensed conceit are found in his poems. The expanded conceit appears in these lines from *Prufrock*:

The yellow fog that rubs its back upon the window-panes,  
The yellow smoke that rubs its muzzle on the window-panes  
Licked its tongue into the corners of the evening,  
Lingered upon the pools that stand in drains,  
Let fall upon its back the soot that falls from chimneys,  
Slipped by the terrace, made a sudden leap,  
And seeing that it was a soft October night,  
Curled once about the house, and fell asleep.

If this comparison of the fog to a cat-like animal is not of the true tribe of "compasses", at least it is something that looks very much like the conceit, and is expanded in the same manner.

The condensed conceit is more common in Eliot. Here are a few examples:

- a) When the evening is spread out against the sky  
Like a patient etherized upon a table.—*Prufrock*.

<sup>10</sup> Gosse, *Jacobean Poets*.

<sup>11</sup> Grierson, *Ibid*.

- b) We have been, let us say, to hear the latest Pole  
Transmit the Preludes, through his hair and finger-tips.  
—*Portrait of a Lady*.
- c) But our lot crawls between dry ribs  
To keep our metaphysics warm.—*Whispers of Immortality*.
- d) We two shall lie together, lapt  
In a five per cent Exchequer Bond.—*A Cooking Egg*.
- e) Under the firelight, under the brush, her hair  
Spread out in fiery points  
Glowed into words, then would be savagely still.—*The Waste Land*.

These are enough to show the frequency of the conceit in Eliot's poetry. Far-fetched these figures are, but bad only if they fail to come off. That is Eliot's view of the metaphysical conceit, a view in which he opposes Dr. Johnson and reasserts Donne's place in the English tradition.<sup>12</sup>

Eliot also has his simple startling phrases and arresting contrasts of association, things he has made admiring analyses of in Donne. One may not meet "a bracelet of bright hair about the bone" in Eliot, but one does meet such phrases as

"Allayed the fever of the bone",  
"Gives promise of pneumatic bliss",  
"The silent vertebrate in brown".

One also finds the imaginative surprise which "makes one little room an every where". Eliot's essay on Marvell shows how much he regards this surprise as a virtue in the Metaphysicals and an essential in all poetry. Here is an example in *Sweeney Among the Nightingales*:

Gloomy Orion and the Dog  
Are veiled; and hushed the shrunken seas;  
The person in the Spanish cape  
Tries to sit on Sweeney's knees,

or this in a different vein from *The Waste Land*,

They washed their feet in soda water  
Et O ces voix d'enfants, chantant dans la coupole!

Out of their context these lines do not show the sombre undercurrent of feeling that is in them, which makes their surprise serious and not frivolous.

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<sup>12</sup> *Homage to John Dryden*, p. 33.

By now the colloquial and bizarre diction, the obscure words and simple phrasing, will be evident in Eliot; and, together with the conceits, will show him in debt to Donne's technique.

What Eliot owes to Donne's "packed verse with its bold, irregular fingering and echoing vowel sounds" will be less easy to show. But here again I can start with an agreement on the part of Gosse and Grierson that Donne kept the five-foot verse, or iambic pentameter, as a norm around which he wove his variations. In some *Reflections on Vers Libre* Eliot reveals an intimate understanding of the metrical problem we find in Donne when he says, "At the beginning of the seventeenth century . . . one finds the same constant evasion and recognition of regularity."<sup>13</sup> His study of seventeenth-century prosody leads him to this formulation: "The ghost of some simple metre should lurk behind the arras in even the 'freest' verse; to advance menacingly as we doze, and withdraw as we rouse".<sup>14</sup> This is certainly the rule in Eliot's verse, and a rule that applies to Donne and Webster, another important influence in Eliot, and is applied to Donne by Gosse and Grierson.

Grierson speaks of Donne's "packed verse", and MacCarthy remarks the "exciting concision" of Eliot's phrasing. But let us see how "bold, irregular fingering" applies to Eliot's verse. Although the passages already quoted from Eliot will show the "constant evasion and recognition of regularity" which govern Donne's verse, let me add this passage from *Gerontion*:

History has many cunning passages, contrived corridors  
And issues; deceives with whispering ambitions,  
Guides us by vanities. Think now  
She gives when our attention is distracted,  
And what she gives, gives with such supple confusions  
That the giving famishes the craving. Gives too late  
What's not believed in, or if still believed  
In memory only, reconsidered passion. Gives too soon  
Into weak hands what's thought can be dispensed with  
Till the refusal propagates a fear.

Surely here is irregular fingering on an iambic pentameter norm! This is text enough for the preaching I have been doing, and for some I have still to do.

<sup>13</sup> *The New Statesman*, March 3, 1917.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*



The trick of repeating a word with shifted accent which Mr. Fletcher Melton<sup>15</sup> finds in Donne and thinks the whole mystery of his art may also be found in Eliot. Here are illustrations of this trick of irregular fingering:

- a) And *would it have been worth* it, after all,  
*Would it have been worth* while, . . . —*Prufrock*.
- b) And *four* wax candles in the darkened room  
*Four* rings of light upon the ceiling overhead, —*Portrait*.
- c) And *how, how* rare and strange it is, to find . . . —*Portrait*.
- d) Well! and what if she should die some *afternoon*,  
*Afternoon* grey and smoky, evening yellow and rose; —*Portrait*.
- e) *Her* hair over *her* arms and *her* arms full of flowers.  
 —*La Figlia Che Piange*.

Echoing vowel sounds, another device of Donne's, Eliot also uses with great effect. The passage quoted from *Gerontion* makes some use of this device. Better and fuller use is found in the following passages:

- a) For *I* have known them *all* already, known them *all*,  
 Have known the evenings, mornings, afternoons,  
*I* have measured out my life with coffee spoons;  
*I* know the voices dying with a dying fall  
 Beneath the music from a farther room.  
 So how should *I* presume? —*Prufrock*.

Here are open *a*'s, *i*'s, and *o*'s against a bass-vowel accompaniment of rhymes in *oo*, producing music that underscores the lassitude and timid scepticism of the whole passage.

- b) *This* music *is* successful with a 'dying fall'  
 Now that we talk of dying—  
 And should *I* have the right to smile? —*Portrait of a Lady*.

This music is chiefly a matter of open and closed *i*'s and their contrast, especially successful because of the retarded movement which those last three open *i*'s bring. Thus the dying fall becomes part of the vowel music itself.

So in these elements of poetical rhetoric, which are part of Donne's technique, we find Eliot adept and unhindered in his expression of a Donne-like density of thought. The study of

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<sup>15</sup>Grierson, *Metaphysical Poetry*.

Donne provoked Eliot to assert that "a style, a rhythm, to be significant, must embody a significant mind", a thought which must have come to Donne as he looked at the easy Spenserianism of his day. Both Donne and Eliot have written in the faith of this assertion.

The last angle from which I should like to regard the debt of Eliot to Donne is that of the attitude of the two poets. The danger in this phase of the question lies in the possible confusion between apparent indebtedness and real kinship of mind. Undoubtedly there is kinship of mind between Eliot and Donne, but this kinship has served to make Eliot more conscious that the virtue of the metaphysical poets was, in his own words, "something permanently valuable, which subsequently disappeared, but ought not to have disappeared". This virtue he attempts to recover in his literary analysis and in his poetic practice.

As one of the peculiarities of this virtue Eliot quotes Johnson's dictum that "their attempts were always analytic", but Eliot insists "that, after the dissociation, they put the material together again in a new unity". And in his essay on Marvell, Eliot is chiefly concerned with defining wit as a metaphysical secret; this he defines as "a tough reasonableness beneath the slight lyric grace" and "an alliance of levity and seriousness (by which the seriousness is intensified)". Although Eliot is dissatisfied with his definition of this metaphysical quality, he is keenly aware that "it is something precious and needed and apparently extinct".

A third element must be associated with the attitude I am trying to define; it is a more individual element in Donne, the mood of the charnel-house. Eliot in the Marvell essay specifically designates this as "the mood of Donne". In this connection we should remember that Eliot regards a poet like Donne as almost "the inventor of an attitude, a system of feeling or of morals". However permanently valuable this mood of the charnel-house may be, it is at least a constant element in the attitude of Donne and, as no reader of *The Waste Land* and *Poems* can doubt, of Eliot. Even the recent poems of Eliot reveal the mood of "death's dream kingdom", for *Doris's*

*Dream Songs* and *The Hollow Men* remind us how Donne deepened love and religion with the thought of death. This resemblance is doubtless one of mental kinship, but we can hardly doubt that the mood has been deepened, perhaps partially created, in Eliot by his profound admiration for Donne and Webster. So deep is that impression as to receive explicit statement in his poetry.

Donne, I suppose, was such another  
Who found no substitute for sense;  
To seize and clutch and penetrate,  
Expert beyond experience,

He knew the anguish of the marrow  
The ague of the skeleton;  
No contact possible to flesh  
Allayed the fever of the bone.

—*Whispers of Immortality.*

How the mood and temper of Donne have colored Eliot's mind appears in the very body of this verse.

The more general qualities of analysis and wit have become ruling dicta in Eliot's verse, because they are permanently valuable things in metaphysical poetry. For the analysis turn back to the passage from *Gerontion*, which analyzes the efficacy of wisdom into disillusion of various sorts, or to the fine analysis of Donne just quoted. We do not need Desmond MacCarthy's word to convince us of the ruling presence of analysis in Eliot. But the reading of either poem will show that Eliot puts his material together again in the new unity of a mood or an emotion.

As to the wit in Eliot, I think none of his critics would disagree with these words: "*l'esprit [wit] est partout présent. Il est son génie même, la forme de son sentiment et de sa pensée*". But these words are written about Donne by Legouis in his *Histoire de la Littérature Anglaise*, and are only a few of many that have a strange application to Eliot. Anyone who doubts the great store which Eliot sets by the wit of the Metaphysicals should read his essay on Marvell; or *The Waste Land*, in which seriousness is intensified by levity; or *La Figlia Che Piange*, which has a tough reasonableness beneath the slight

lyric grace. And certainly wit is the mental facet which catches the light in *Prufrock* and the *Portrait of a Lady*. To illustrate Eliot as a master of the witty phrase, let me quote:

- a) My smile falls heavily among the bric-a-brac.—*Portrait*.
- b) And when I am formulated, sprawling on a pin,—*Prufrock*.
- c) But every week we hear rejoice  
The Church, at being one with God.—*The Hippopotamus*.

To sum up the method curiously similar to that of the "metaphysical poets" which Eliot describes as the modern technique, and which I hope I have shown in his poetry, let me add to the unified sensibility, colloquial and bizarre vocabulary and verse, conceit, and poetical rhetoric, these last qualities of analysis and wit. This metaphysical method puts Eliot in debt to Donne, but Eliot repays this debt by being, like Donne, a curious explorer of the soul, and by giving to his exploration that curious leaping imagination which can

Go and catch a falling star,  
Get with child a mandrake root.—DONNE.

So superbly is this method adapted to this kind of imagination that any mental kinship would almost surely draw Eliot to the technique of Donne.

Such seems to me the literary filiation of Eliot. Mr. Richard Aldington, who has given us the best literary portrait of Eliot, puts it thus: "Mr. Eliot's poetry is traditional, linking up on the one hand with the ironic French poets and, on the other, with the stately, subtle-minded Englishmen of the Renaissance".<sup>16</sup> And to complete the circle, Eliot says that these same ironic French poets "are nearer to the 'school of Donne' than any modern English poet".<sup>17</sup> Except himself, I would add.

Eliot stands to his age as Donne to his, in opposition to the merely pretty and conventional, to the facile and copious, and to the shallow and affectedly simple. He abhors the commonplace and delights in the subtle; and, like Donne, he has felt that curiosity of the soul which yearns to know. When Grier-

<sup>16</sup> Aldington, *Literary Studies and Reviews*.

<sup>17</sup> *Homage to John Dryden*, p. 32.

son speaks of "the fullest record in our literature of the disintegrating collision in a sensitive mind of the old tradition and the new learning", one scarcely knows which he is describing better, *The Second Anniversary* in the seventeenth century, or *The Waste Land* in the twentieth. Both the old poet and the the new poet are supremely aware of the soul of his age, in which

The new philosophy calls all in doubt,—DONNE.

and in that soul each hears, and echoes in his verse, the song which we hear after him

And think those broken and soft notes to be  
Division, and thy happiest harmony.—DONNE.

GEORGE WILLIAMSON.

Pomona College.

#### A MORNING CRYSTAL-CLEAR

Had I allowed my mood to sway me quite,  
The mood that would have yielded to his will,  
Letting his eyes linger in mine until  
All life were centred in the fierce delight  
Of taking what we thirsted for—the sight  
Of the long road that climbs the strenuous hill  
Forgot, and the low murmur of the rill . . . ;  
If I had let him kiss me yesternight :

I could not now, when snowflakes white and free  
Whirl through a golden air, outdance the throng,  
Wilder than they, in icy revelry.  
I could not run before the wind along  
High paths, atingle with the ecstasy  
Of living all untamed and swift and strong.

ALICE FREDA BRAUNLICH.



## THE MINSTREL

### PROLOGUE

#### *A Minstrel speaks:*

"A legend, friends, you'd have me weave,  
Of kings and princes and maids, I believe;  
Of travels and tasks, and a year-long roam,  
Ere I bring dream children back to their home.  
You'd hear of the woods, the sea, and the star  
Brought together in lands afar?  
I'll do it if this leave you grant  
That I sometimes speak and sometimes chant.  
Grant me this favor my lay to make,  
And I'll tell my tale without much break.  
Your leave is given? I'll tell you true,  
Of the King, the Prince, and a Princess, too."

\* \* \*

The Place is set in a castle hall,  
The Time,—why that is the youth of all,  
When Spring's own lure doth piercing call.  
Above the Princess, broods the Great King,  
Beside her the Prince—Through the door floats Spring,  
As the whole court waits for the Minstrel to sing.  
A few sweeping chords from the Minstrel's lyre,  
And his chant begins; now adream—now afire.

### BALLAD

The Great King dreamed in his granite chair,  
Up on the ramparts gray and bare,  
And spring winds danced in his silvered hair.

King, as far as his eye could see,—  
And yet he mused, "Ah, could I be  
Again with the maid who wedded me!"

Years he had dreamed,—but the years were sped,  
The while he thought on his Queen, long dead,  
Who dying, left a babe in her stead.

Then out, and into the world of May,  
Had slipped her spirit sweet and gay.  
Gone—on such a day as to-day.

Where had a soul so joyous fled?  
What were the words that she last had said?  
“Lord,—I leave—a Prince—in my stead!”

The King rose up from his granite chair,  
Looked out from the ramparts, chill and bare—  
Lo, Spring was painting the country fair.

Fair, with purple and rose and green,  
Fair with Spring’s own gorgeous sheen—  
And he yearned deep for his fair young Queen!

But the babe? Ah, quickly the years had fled,—  
The Prince was a man, not a babe to be led,  
The Prince—her son—was he nobly bred?

The Great King left his ramparts then;  
With a sigh he reëntered the world of men,  
To rule as a King should rule, again.

The sweeping chords died into silence as the Minstrel paused to rest his tired voice and hands. The youth of the kingdom thronged the vast hall to hear him tell his tale of the coming of the fair young Princess, who sat smiling from her security in the strength of the Prince beside her.

Quoth the Minstrel, “It’s tired I am, and for a while I’d speak, and not sing. And if you then must have the tale, I’ll tell it true.”

“Rest,” said the Princess gently, “but tell us the tale as soon as may be, for youth waits.”

“I’ll tell the tale now, then,” quoth the Minstrel, plucking the strings a bit peevishly. But the Princess’s eyes were vivid of hue,—candid and gay, and fair and true: “Have you rested, good Minstrel?—our tale tell you.” So, at her command, the Minstrel chanted:

We’d led the kingdom as best we could,  
The Prince had learned as a ruler should,  
And came now to meet his Father’s mood.

And the King stood tall and regal then,  
And said: "I have come to the world again  
To see my son, a Man among men.

"Now bring me together from far and near  
The youth of the kingdom, that I may hear,  
As a true king should, what they hold most dear.

"I'd seek, too, a bride for my only son;  
Range me the damsels, every one,  
To train for the queenly duties done."

The Minstrel paused, but the Prince with a courteous gesture  
waved him on. "Make haste, good friend, must we wait the  
spring day through, ere your tale be told?"

"Some of it then you must e'en tell yourselves," said the  
Minstrel, "for none of us stayed to see the meeting 'twixt  
Father and Son. We made haste to fulfil the King's command,  
and we flew to the outlying ends of the kingdom, where dwelt  
the strange folk, and in again to the near lands,—and

We called all the folk to the castle tall:

"Make haste, each one, to the court's great hall,  
For behold, the King would see you *all*."

Though we brought maids dancing through the wood,  
Though they sprang from the sea in its wildest mood,—  
Said the King, "You've not brought me all you could!

"For another claim I feel afar,—  
Someone's held back by a golden bar!  
Fetch me the maid from the farthest star!"

Now the Minstrel stopped his song to appeal to the Princess:  
"Most Gracious Lady, is it indeed your will that I tell in front of  
all this foolish youth *why* the maid from the farthest star would  
not come? Is it well to speak always the *whole* truth?"

But the tender smile of the Princess cheered him, and her  
eyes gleamed with pleasure in scene and story. Before her sat  
the faithful, anxious old Minstrel with his lyre, surrounded by  
the gay youth of the land. At her feet lay a shaggy hound, her  
dumb and devoted defender; at her side sat the Prince: his

life and love were hers; above them loomed the figure of the Great King—hers, too, were his care, his life and devotion! From Great King to tiniest babe, all adored the Princess.

"Good Minstrel," said she, "truth never harmed the truly royal. On with the tale." So the Minstrel took up his chant again:

We told the King that the reason why,  
Was that the maid was plain and shy,  
And sooner than come she would rather die.

We told him her back was twisted, too,  
With all the work of her star to do,  
And why should *she* rank with a favored few?

But the Great King smiled, and kindly said,  
"Tell the poor maid she hath naught to dread—  
But come she must! Let your ways be sped."

So we brought the maid from the farthest star;  
Gray was her gown, and her back—a mar!  
But the Prince caught her eye and loved her afar.

For her eyes were steady, and starry, too,  
Vivid and candid, and brave, and true,—  
And their color was that of the heaven's own blue.

I think that those who saw her then,  
Thought only,—Here is a wondrous friend!  
'Tis pity the King would have her come,  
For strong and sure were the other maids.  
One had come leaping up from the sea,  
One had danced gaily in from the wood,  
Their raiment was gay,  
Their backs were straight,—

And yet, when the star maid entered the hall,  
Song, warmth, and gladness came to us all,  
As we saw her gaze to the young Prince call!

Yet firm and steady she held her pace,  
With but a quiver across her face,  
As the Great King called her to take her place.

And her place was between the maid from the sea,  
And the maid from the forest,—and from these three  
Must the Prince choose a bride,—and quiet was he.

Said the King: "To maids of noble pride,  
I offer a chance to become the bride  
Of the royal Prince who stands at my side.

"But heed ye well—there lies a task  
Which must be done ere one can ask  
The love of the kingdom in which to bask.

"And this is a thing that can scarce be told—  
For the heart of my people is what I'd hold!  
Their love is more precious than jewels and gold.

"To the front I call the maid from the sea,  
And the maid from the star and the sprite from the tree;  
For well I know ye are leaders three.

.....  
"Oh, little maid from the deep green sea,  
All the great waters call loud to thee;  
Can'st thou then leave them, a queen to be?

"Think of it well. And thou, sprite from the wood,  
A queen may not follow her varying mood,  
For she must think of her people's good.

"And thou, little maid from the farthest star,  
Must learn that men but mortal are—  
No queen may live from her people afar.

"Now go ye awake, through road and dell;  
The queen may dream,—if she doeth as well—  
But come safely back your dreams to tell!

"And this most earnestly do I say:  
Oh come ye back in a year and a day,  
For I'd see you here next month o' May."

The Minstrel paused to rest a moment, and the Princess  
turned to speak a word to the Great King. But even as she  
turned, he wandered toward the stairway, -



For he must slip back to the ramparts bare  
To dream of his queen in the sunlit air—  
And *near* she seemed, as he climbed the stair !

Below in the great hall the Minstrel made haste to finish his  
tale of the maids.

They danced from the courtyard out of the town—  
“Where shall we go, oh maids green, gray, and brown?”  
Said the sea maid,—“Steps lead trippingly down,

“Out of the town and into the green,  
Out where the air is cool and clean—  
Look—where the shimmer of water is seen !”

But the little gray star maid said, “Take the road.  
Though hard and ugly, it tells the code  
Of men and women whose crops have been sowed.

“Some we’ll find dark and some most bright,  
Yet a queen must sift the wrong from the right.  
Ah, travel the road till we rest at night !”

Then she sang a song like a golden bell,  
And the maidens followed as under a spell,  
For her song was sober yet gay as well.

But the road was steep and the day came hot  
And many lamented their wretched lot.  
“What, travel so far? Indeed they’d not !”

But the star maid helped them all along,  
Their troubles and griefs she walked among,  
And her back felt straighter and almost strong.

Their first night out on the open road,  
They gathered fagots, full heavy a load,  
To build a fire and spake in their mode.

Yes, after a meal in the clear still air,  
They gathered about the glowing fire,  
And spake of the end of the journey.

Said one: "When I am *truly* queen,  
I shall live ever on river and sea;  
The courtiers well have led the kingdom,  
Let them then keep on."  
Said another: "I go to the shade of the woods,  
The song of the thrush,  
The stir of the wind in the trees,  
And the Prince beside me there!  
Think you the world holds aught so joyous?"

But the star maid said, "We wend our way  
Straight to the hearts of men each day—  
The hearth may teach us a word to say."

So day after day the road they trod,  
And the star maid cheered both princess and clod  
Though oft' she ached with the dreary plod.

But ever she straighter and stronger grew—  
More and more vivid her eyes of blue,  
As her thoughts, far back, to the young Prince flew.

Aye, *all* of the maidens grew firm and strong,  
As they traveled the road the months along!  
And they learned a wondrous lovely song.

And mothers, and children ran out to hear,  
And told right quick what they held most dear,—  
'Twas the growth of the family love and cheer!

Now the sun beat down and the rains oft' fell,  
Yet they followed the star maid as under a spell,  
For her courage and love were a cooling well.

Green, gray, and brown wore to silvery sheen;  
No feeling but friendship there lay between  
The maids when they circled the road, I ween.

The waters still called to the maid from the sea,  
And still danced the wood sprite at sight of a tree;  
But the star maid held them, her friends they would be.

But now they must hasten; again 'twas May,  
And though they were far on their homeward way,  
The King had said: "Be a year and a day."

"Rest you for a moment, good Minstrel," said the Princess,  
"your tale is well nigh told."

"Nay," said the Minstrel, "let me finish now and then rest,  
for well *you* know the end."

So on a day, while the King and the Prince yet waited, of a  
sudden they heard a burst of merry song. Up to the ramparts  
they hastened, and beheld the return of the maids!

Springing along with health and cheer,  
Their cheeks were rosy, their eyes were clear,—  
For they'd *found* what the people held most dear!

And one danced gaily the way along,  
Silver her gown,—and her self, straight and strong,  
As she lightly danced ahead of the throng.

Said the Great King sadly, "There's but one scar—  
I see no twisted maid from the star."

Said the Prince, "*I* held her eyes from afar!"

So down they swept to the castle hall,  
To hold a court for the maidens all,—  
And behold,—the star maid stood regal and tall!

Then the Prince went forward and stood at her side,  
Quoth he to the King: "Grant them *all* great pride;  
But the Star Maid, Sire, I take for my Bride!"

Then the Maid stood vivid and rosy of hue,  
As the Great King looked her through and through  
Till he said, "My daughter, it is your due.

"Now let your betrothal be quickly sped;  
I'd see the Prince to you right soon wed,  
As I to my own Queen—dead—*long dead!*"

So in a day their vows were heard;  
The Prince and the Princess plighted their word,  
And joy flew in like a nesting bird.

. . . . .

The tale was told, and after a moment's hush the Prince spoke:  
"Gramercy, good Minstrel! your tale is well and truly told—  
we thank you." And down he went to lay his hand on the

Minstrel's shoulder and say, "My Princess is fain to thank you, too; come, good friend,—let her speak her word."

So the Princess thanked him gaily, too,—vivid her smile, and candid and true; and her eyes shone deep with a melting blue!

Half dreaming the minstrel kissed her hand,—and as he bent—a string broke on his lyre. He straightened and looked about. "The King," said he, "the Great King—I would have His Word. Where is the King?"

"'Twas but a moment, since he stood at my elbow," said the Prince. But the Princess started to her feet.

"I saw him near the stair, but thought naught of it—but the ramparts—make haste to the ramparts, for sure am I that he is there, and I fear,—I know not what I fear. To the King! To the King!"

At her word the Minstrel fell—the lyre dropping broken from his hand.

Up the stair flew the Prince and the Princess, the hound at their heels, the court following. But when they reached the ramparts they stood quiet, then dropped to their knees. The King was there indeed, the dove of peace unafraid on his shoulder. The great hound threw back his head and howled—yet why?—

For the Great King, ever just and fair,  
Had met his queen in the sweet May air,  
And slept for aye on the ramparts bare.

EDNA MINOR.

New York City.

## THE POETRY OF TO-MORROW

Prophecy in the realm of poetry is a delicate and precarious task. According to many it will seem also a futile one. "Why," I can hear someone say, "with all the rich and bewildering world of literature round about us waiting to be evaluated, interpreted, should we concern ourselves with the spiritual raiment of the morrow. Sufficient unto the day"—and so on.

And yet from the maelstrom of present-day cross currents some of us like to try to trace the true course; or, as good old Carlyle would say, from the world conflagration of the old, discern "organic filaments" connecting it with the new. To make a study of future poetry presupposes a criticism of that of to-day; it is merely a slight difference of focus that is required.

Fortunately such a task is not quite as nebulous as it would appear; the would-be seer is not thrown either upon his own clairvoyance or upon vague generalities. The love of writing verse is a typical feature of our life to-day. It is encouraged in the colleges, as well as in later life; in the high schools as well as in the colleges; in fact it seems actually to have invaded the kindergarten. To give a single example, there is Hughes Mearns's *Creative Youth* which has so delightfully let us into the secret, giving us a peep into the school laboratory. And then with a flick of the magician's rod, he has shown us the results, poetry of which adults might well be proud. But this book is too familiar to need further comment.

Familiar, too, is the work of one or two particular child-poets, Hilda Conkling and Nathalia Crane. The case of the latter we will not enter upon here, partly because to the mind of more than one discerning critic it represents not the work of Nathalia, but a collaboration between her and her father; and even more because her poems are not poems of youth, but the expression of a sophisticated cynicism, which though they may be the workmanship of the child, nevertheless reflect the attitudes of older people who have influenced her. The hand may be that of Nathalia, but the voice is that of a world-weary cynic.



Hilda Conkling, on the other hand, gives us in her verse the intuition that only a child could have. To offer any critical comment would be superfluous. There is all the limpidity, crystal clearness that one would wish to find in the fancy of a little girl of peculiar poetic sensibility and of utterly unspoiled nature.

There is a brook I must hear  
Before I go to sleep.  
There is a birch-tree I must visit,  
Every night of clearness.

or

We are friends,  
My mind and I . . .  
Yet sometimes we cannot understand each other,  
As though a cloud had gone over the sun,  
Or the pool all blind with trees  
Had forgotten the sky.

Such verse can come only from the very young and gifted.

But it would be unsafe to draw many conclusions from the evidence of one young poet so richly endowed. My own investigation (if indeed the word *investigation* can be applied to anything so tenuous) is based upon poetry written by my own students in college and especially upon poetry written by pupils in high and secondary schools which is published in *The Gleam*, a magazine of verse published by school children, of which I happen to be one of the editors. This paper, now about five years old, is issued quarterly by The School and Poetry Association and contains work by pupils from public and private schools all over the country. The verse contained here (from which two anthologies have been compiled already) represents thus not the work of any school like Lincoln, where the classes have the privilege of Mr. Mearns's teaching and invigorating guidance, but rather the typical promising verse from our young American democracy. Though the enrollment at present includes only between two and three hundred schools, it is constantly increasing, and it seems likely that the magazine will become ever more widely representative. The verse, since it is sent in by teachers, not students themselves, probably contains a certain amount of revision, but in most cases the impression is so unified and so definitely that of

a young writer that the direction must be more through wise guidance and suggestion than through actual assistance.

From this magazine, then, if anywhere, we might find some clue to the tendencies of to-morrow. And so I find myself raising two or three question:

(1) What is the proportion of free verse to that of the more regular strictly metrical, rimed forms?

(2) If imitative, is the imitation rather of the earlier or present-day poets?

(3) What tendencies, if any, differentiate it from the work of our older poets of to-day?

Such questions give a slight basis for speculation and reflection.

The matter of metre I found on the whole to be least significant. There is a goodly amount of free verse, but on the whole, as one might expect, rather more that is regular and strongly rhythmical. This in the case of the young is surely natural, for sense of rhythm, far from being an acquired taste, like caviare, is innate, something that we have to educate *out of* (if such education be desirable). It might be paralleled to children's preference for strong, vivid color and the adult's acquired love of delicate shading, nuance, subdued tone, which, according to Ruskin, is a sign of degeneracy. (But this is unpardonable digression.) The verse, then, is often regularly rhythmical. In the less regular forms, both rimed and unrimed, there is sometimes the shapelessness that is the bane of modern verse, but surprisingly often a successful attempt for pattern.

As to the second point—the nature of imitation. (I assume that there must be a large proportion of it; we all love to “play the sedulous ape”, sometimes unconsciously, but in the case of school children it is inevitable. As Newman says in his famous essay—“the schoolboy is storing up from the years of plenty in preparation for the lean years to follow”). As to the poets imitated, the decision rests quite as often with the teacher as with the student. An illuminating instance occurs to me. Some verse was submitted to me from a girl in a school in Canada which was in the very form and spirit of the eighteenth century. Can it be that modern poets, English and American, played no part in the curriculum of her school? On the

whole, the imitation is preponderatingly that of the moderns. It cannot possibly be confused with the verse of yesterday.

Before facing the third difficult question—how far the verse of these boys and girls differs from that of their fathers, or older brothers, one must pause a moment to see if it is possible to catch the most authentic effort of the so-called modern note. In anything that follows I hasten to forestall criticism by saying that my impressions make no pretense of being anything more than the most personal reactions; no one would recognize more than I their inadequacy as objective standards. With poetry so hospitable that it includes the philosophical, marrowy lines of Robinson at one end and the delicate, fragile lyrics of Sara Teasdale at another, that it welcomes equally the lyric of Sandburg, Miss Millay, Frost, Amy Lowell and hosts of others, any sweeping generalizations are doomed to failure. Is it possible to find a kind of least common denominator, an irreducible minimum—something unmistakable, distinctive, that with all its variations still differentiates all these poets from those of earlier days?

In answer there is one word that flashes before my mind—*immediacy*. "Emotion recollected in tranquillity", "impassioned contemplation" are the peculiar prerogatives of Wordsworth, and yet they apply in some degree to all the verse of the nineteenth century. Whatever the modern poetry is, it is *not* this. The poetry of an earlier age was largely reflective; but however much meditation and forethought may go into the composing of modern poetry its effect is vivid, pungent, direct, white-hot, sometimes crude and a bit raw, but never cooled or philosophized or generalized. It burns and stings.

In making modern American poetry begin with Emily Dickinson, Mr. Untermeyer shows discernment. In her are adumbrated many modern traits, waywardness, irony, sense of conflict, lack of poise, irregularity of form, amazing concentration of thought. (Is it irreverent to suggest that the extraordinary praise that she has recently met is owing as much to our sympathy with her method as to the high quality of her poetry?) Her compression has never since been quite attained, her abruptness of outer form has been sometimes smoothed, more

often polished to a finer, sharper edge. Her cryptic ways of thought have become with many almost a mannerism. The poetry of to-day has also a metaphysical trend that reminds one of John Donne, a philosophy that leads not to quiet thought but one that "startles into sharp and eager observation".

A criticism of life it is—one that pierces the heart, to discern its inmost secret, sometimes leaving a yawning, jagged wound. Its barbed quality is most shining in the verses of Miss Millay, most lacerating in a recent volume of Virginia Moore. How significant, by the way, is its title, *Not Poppy*—a very shout of defiance in the face of the serener centuries. However great is the danger of drug-traffic these days—and we are told that it is menacing—opium does not characterize our verse. One trembles to think what would be the fate of a volume of poetry these days entitled "Opiates".

With its variety of forms and its haunting new rhythms, poetry of to-day has also brought in a new intensity. It is, at the same time intensive and extensive—rather a remarkable thing to achieve.

Finally, it has repudiated the old poetic diction with a thoroughness that makes Wordsworth's epoch-making attempt look pale and ineffectual. It has added new words, some beautiful, some with the fascinating ugliness of Gothic gargoyles; it has changed parts of speech in a fashion that would make Keats's experiments in the *Endymion* (so belabored by critics) seem slight and trivial. Color, sound, touch, taste, smell—motion, even—all the senses are portrayed with that *immediacy* which to me seems the distinguishing trait of our modern poetry.

How far do our young poets follow in the intrepid footsteps of their elders? In the metre, there is an attempt at variety that is interesting, in vocabulary there is a studied avoidance of the old *clichés*, but not many new, fantastic words. Extreme youth tends to conservatism nearly always; its experience is limited, its vocabulary even more so. Most of the writers here are too young to write "white-hot from the heart of passion", but they have the method of the moderns; when the experience comes to set fire to their imagination, they will perhaps be better equipped with the means of expression than ever before.

What their verse does reflect is youthful idealism, enthusiasm, love of nature, love of adventure, delicate fantasy, and yearning for romance. After all, what would one have youth reflect if not these? They are not afraid of realism, either. There is a strikingly lyrical quality in most, perhaps because of their singleness of aim; they have not lived long enough or suffered enough to have their purposes made "cross and shifting"; and the singing quality is more noticeable because the utterance is not choked by conflict.

Let us take a few examples from the anthology *Dawn*; "Youth-Fire" is typical:

The joy that beats in the heart of Dawn,  
In her moon-misty robes of light,  
Throbs now in a wild, fierce ecstasy  
In my young heart tonight.  
'Tis the flame of my youth that is surging high—  
The longing to live—to do;  
'Tis the white, pure fire of a young desire—  
The challenge—be clean! be true!

One imagines that this idealistic dreamy youth is quite as authentic as the lurid colors in which youth to-day is so apt to be painted. Dreaming is a favorite subject—dreams of Hindustan, and Old Japan—"to cargo spices and myrrh." School-boy fancy, or rather tom-boy fancy (for author is a girl) runs riot in a delightful song of a pirate; and a little poem called "Twilight" has a wistful touch of romance.

There are echoes of Amy Lowell in the description of an exotic oriental poppy in "My Prim New England Garden." And the outgrowth of tree poems shows the spell of Joyce Kilmer. Among these, one by John Holmes stands out for its sincerity and simplicity:

I had forgotten how I loved that tree  
And just the way its branches laced  
The sky behind, the way the wind  
Sang through it, how it faced  
The sun each day and stood  
In silhouette from roots to crown  
Against the moon at night—  
I had forgotten—till they chopped it down.



Among his other poems there are lines to a father (trying to enter into the lives of the young son and daughter), who

puts his arm  
Across the son's broad shoulder  
Dumbly as fathers do.

which expresses the same sympathy and rather extraordinary maturity of thought, combined with simple compression of utterance. In this little anthology another figure stands out—also a boy!—Robbins Fowler, whose poem "Souls" is arresting:

The poet's soul flows upward  
From the pages of his open book;  
The artist's soul rushes to meet you  
From the gold-tinted canvas of his masterpiece.  
High over the city,  
Suffused through every brick  
    and column of some mastodonic structure,  
The architect's soul looks down in silent benediction.  
The soul of a plain man lies hidden far down in his children's eyes,  
Far down in a friend's heart.

Are we reading in this verse too much of our own desires when we find in it a sensitiveness to beauty (perhaps never so universal, despite all the outward ugliness about us); beauty in the city sky-scraper and in the plain man's life, as well as in the mountain brook and the mediæval hero of romance?—a lyric clearness and limpidity of expression, a vocabulary simple but apt and sincere? I do not believe so. But from this point it is hard to proceed with any surety of footing. Yet is it possible that the verse to come from our new poets, who live in an age farther removed from the Great War and the post-war demoralization will have the intensity and poignancy of their predecessors, with something of the poise and serenity of the poets of older days? Poise and serenity, above all, repose—that is what this over-strained, rather hectic age needs most in life and in art. Perhaps, someone will say that it is no longer possible to feel amid the city's jar a peace "man did not make and cannot mar." But if that be true, if poetry can stimulate and rouse only, never rest or recreate, we shall have to reconcile ourselves to becoming a generation of neurotics.

To expect signs of mellowness, ripeness in the very young poets would be preposterous, and yet we hope for ripeness to come, because there is no note of forcing here, nothing of prematurity or precosity. And when, in our young friend, John Holmes, we find these lines—somewhat akin to Arnold's plea—

A sense of calm, unhurried wonder at the days  
God makes for us.

we like to read into them something prophetic of an age that will be serene without being slumbrous, intense without being hysterical. And a few of us cherish a high hope, as we turn from some of the more feverish verse of our very poignant poets of to-day to the limpid verse of a Hilda Conkling, and feel the coolnesses of a mountain brook in midsummer.

CHARLOTTE F. BABCOCK.

Boston, Massachusetts.

### ON BARREN ROCKS I POURED MY BLOOD

On barren rocks I poured my blood  
And, where I stood,  
Before my clouded eyes  
And under desolate skies  
A miracle occurred:  
Something stirred!  
And over the changing planet  
Flowers dared the peril  
Of regions stark and sterile  
And grasses pierced the granite.

MELVILLE CANE.

## THE SOUTH SPEAKS OUT

Nothing is more clearly indicative of the new spirit stirring in the South than the literature which has appeared in the last five or six years. The most casual reader is now aware that the point of view in Southern letters at present contrasts sharply with that of the past. This new spirit has not come suddenly, though we are somewhat suddenly aware of it. It has its roots well back in the past, and more than one Southern writer can be pointed to who since the early years of the century has been writing realism with critical implications. But what was for many years a more or less isolated manifestation has come to be a general tendency. It was with the appearance in 1921 in the *Century Magazine* of Stribling's *Birthright* that I first became conscious of what seemed to be an abrupt break with the traditional treatment of Southern themes by Southern writers. Realizing that it takes more than one swallow to make a summer, I began watching with eagerness for signs of an awakening. And they have come in quick succession, each year showing a marked advance over the preceding one, both in output and in the receptive attitude of the Southern public toward the new point of view.

We have been accustomed in the South to a literature whose chief concern was to uphold the traditions of the South and to refrain from violating an accepted code of good taste. Our ante-bellum poets never varied from this tradition. Most of them extolled the glories of the South with lavish sentiment and chivalrous phrases paid tribute to her beauties. Generally their songs were of beautiful women, fair skies, loyal hearts, and a loved land. The Civil War poets carried on this spirit of uncritical devotion to the Southland, sometimes gently, sometimes in a fiercely partisan spirit. With the coming of the "New South" of the seventies we find the old spirit perpetuated in new guise. We honor the chief herald of the South's new day, Henry W. Grady, for putting his land in a juster light before the

rest of the world. But viewed in retrospect, he appears romantically visionary, uncritically laudatory. The South's race problem would be practically nonexistent to-day had he been justified by fact when he affirmed that the South's relations to the Negro are "close and cordial", and further added that faith had been kept with him in the future.

The chief exponent of the old tradition in the life and letters of the South, however, has been Thomas Nelson Page. He, more than any other, was skilled in putting the South's best foot foremost. We cherished the illusion that the South of the Page romances was the real South, a South of gracious old mansions and of a cultured chivalrous aristocracy, whose sons were all gallant and whose daughters were all fair. The plain daughters of the Old South were unchronicled, but that such did exist we may be convinced by glimpses into family albums and by sidelong glances at some of their descendants.

The literature of the South in the past has satisfied a demand for romanticism and idealism, but it has been inadequate as a representation and interpretation of life because it shunned anything deeply unpleasant and tabooed. This attitude was shown in the use of the Negro as literary material. As a picturesque figure dotting our Southern landscapes he was a cherished possession, a literary asset. Against our cotton fields he made a very effective study in black and white. Since the days of Irving Russell he has been exploited in our literature as a subject of pathos or of humor and caricature. And always the Southern audience demanded that the literary treatment of the Negro be such as to uphold the tradition of cordial relations and fair dealing. We have dealt none too kindly with those of the past generation who touched upon uncomplimentary phases of the white man's relations with the Negro. The story of George W. Cable's treatment at the hands of the South is too familiar to need repeating here.

Likewise the poor whites and the tenant farmer of the South entered stories of the earlier period solely as local color background appreciated chiefly for their dialect. We did not confess to ourselves, much less to the public, the evils of a social system which made possible their condition,

nor ever, so far as I am aware, was their life presented from their own point of view. Walter Hines Page made himself unpopular by telling the South the facts regarding her neglected classes. In his campaign for the "forgotten man" Page struck at the complacency and backwardness of the South.

Sex was another subject which was never treated except in a romantic light. While we may be thankful to have escaped the enormities of perverted realism committed in the name of frankness, we went too far with our false modesty and our self-conscious avoidance of the theme. We have demanded a happy ending to the stories of Southern life; or if tragic, we have demanded that the tragedy be softened by tender sentiment and imposed by conditions from without, never inherent in conditions of life in the South. We have shrunk from grim, stark tragedy silhouetted against a dull sky; we have preferred to see it through a veil of romance.

There were, however, among the earlier writers some who had yearnings after the truth. Joel Chandler Harris, who, perhaps more clearly than any other sensed this thing most needful in Southern letters, declared that "truth is more important than sectionalism", and that the writer in the South "must be intensely local in feeling but utterly unpartisan and unprejudiced as to opinions, traditions and sentiments". Even earlier than Harris we find Sidney Lanier a modern, forward-looking spirit, eager to be rid of the encumbrances of the past. This impatience with outworn tradition he expressed in "Barnacles", where he beseeches the Old Past to "let go and drop in the sea" for "it hindereth me from sailing". His over-elaborate verse and his hectic optimism do not conceal the fact that he was a modern spirit the significance of whose utterances was, in a large measure, overlooked by the generation in which he wrote. James Lane Allen and George W. Cable also ran counter in more than one book to the accepted tradition in Southern letters. In the main, though, the code held, and those who in a different environment might have written with more fidelity to their themes acquiesced and gave what was expected of them.



While social, religious, and literary conservatism still dominate the South to a large extent, and while the romantic outlook on life still persists, we are already well launched into a new era. We are exchanging tact for fact. Though still acutely sensitive on certain points, we are becoming receptive of the truth. This change has come not as a complete break with the past but rather as an adjustment of the old standards of good taste to the changed conditions of life and to ideas of the new age. In spite of discouraging reactions against enlightenment, there is in the South a constantly increasing public which is aware of the new age and is eager for an intelligent interpretation of life. And it is this public which is calling out a group of writers who in unmistakable tones are voicing the new note in Southern literature.

Among these writers of the South are many whom we should scarcely recognize as Southern did we not turn to the anthologists' biographical notes, so completely have they turned from a Southern milieu to identify themselves with a sectionless movement in modern literature. John Gould Fletcher, Cale Young Rice, David Morton, and Lawrence Stallings among the creative writers, and Frances Newman, J. W. Krutch, and Clement Wood, as critics have little, if any, of the soil of their native South clinging to their boots. John Crowe Ransom quite deliberately renounces his patrimony. In *The Old Mansion* he represents himself as contemplating the possibilities of Southern material for his pen, but "it came to nothing" and he turns quite casually to "dip, alas, into some unseemlier world". He, like others, possesses qualities which may be ascribed to his inheritance, but his method and subject-matter are without definite locale. Christopher Morley says of him that he "shows Southern grace but Northern light". Yet in view of the awakening among Southern intellectuals, we may possibly claim the light also to be Southern. He is the leader of the intellectual movement in Southern poetry which emanated from the Fugitive group in Nashville. Other names connected with this movement in poetry are those of Allan Tate and Donald Davidson, though the latter possesses a strong lyrical impulse which his cerebralist associations have left intact.

James Branch Cabell has likewise rejected the Southern milieu and has created a realm of his own, *Poictesme*, in which he brandishes the sword of satire against the human race in general and the South and the Virginia aristocracy in particular. Frances Newman, in her too consciously clever *Hard Boiled Virgin*—a satirical antidote to the moonlight and Hammock romance of the past—keeps to the Southern field but evidently with the purpose of showing that whatever the South has cherished she abhors. The style, except for occasional flashes of brilliance, is irritating, and the subject-matter does nothing to redeem it. Miss Newman is out of line with the most authentic movements in contemporary fiction, which, while genuine in its realism, is not devoid of sympathy and artistic perceptions. Miss Glasgow has satirized far more cleverly the social ideals of the older South in *Romantic Comedians* and has done it without the smartness and sophistication of Miss Newman.

A considerable number of writers in the South are concerning themselves with distinctly Southern material, some of them treating the old themes in the spirit of the new age and others finding new themes in the old environment. The isolated peoples of the Southern mountains are the subject of much recent writing, but the glamor and romance that were so long features of the mountain story are notably lacking. Lula Vollmer of North Carolina, in *Sun Up* and again in *Shame Woman* gives us glimpses into the narrow repressed life of the mountain dwellers, showing their views warped by their environment. Hatcher Hughes, South Carolina, in his drama, *Hell Bent for Heaven*, presents the effects of religious fanaticism on these isolated people. Under the direction of Dr. Koch, University of North Carolina students have done distinctive work in this field, drawing their materials not only from the mountains but also from the tenant class of the lowlands. Lucy Furman of Kentucky, in *Quare Women*, and later mountain sketches portrays her mountain characters with a fidelity to life, an exactness of detail, and an essence of romantic glamor that are a distinct departure from the earlier mountain story.

The outstanding fiction thus far dealing with the mountain region is Dubose Heyward's *Angel*. A beauty truly of the mountains invests the book, yet there are no false gleams. While one moves through the story with his head in a mist of laurel and flame azalias, he is always aware that his feet are on the firm earth of the mountain trail. It is a great book, but it is significant in that its author has been able to poetize his material without weakening its realism. More than any other Southern writer Dubose Heyward seems to understand and love his field, to have a clear vision of modern literary trends, and to be able to fit these to his material. He has two fields in either of which he seems equally at home: Charleston and the Carolina Low Country; and the mountains of North Carolina. His attitude is expressed in his poem *The Mountain Town* where he speaks of "these people that I know and understand a little and love much". He has been one of the moving spirits in the clearly defined regional movements of South Carolina, which seems to be one of the most significant results of the activity of the South Carolina Poetry Society.

Turning from the mountains to the hill country and the low lands, we find the entrance into Southern fiction of a type little known in the earlier literature, the tenant farmer. Henry Bellamen, also of South Carolina, presents in *Petenera's Daughter* (1926) the social and economic aspects of the problem as they affect the tenant and his family. Elizabeth Madox Roberts, Kentucky, in *The Time of Man* (1926) has achieved supreme success in her portrayal of the tragedy of ignorance and futile endeavor among the migratory tenant class. Her work takes on almost epic scope, and she characterizes not only her own pathetic group of characters but repressed folk of all lands and all times. Her superb achievement emphasizes afresh the oneness of Beauty and Truth, for she has created the beautiful out of the pathetically commonplace, at the same time not obscuring its reality. Concerned also in this field is T. S. Stripling, who, in *Teefallow* (1926) presents the hillfolk of Tennessee. There is abundant evidence in this book of the writer's first-

hand knowledge of the field and also of his lack of illusions, but his work is in the main half-way realism, for while the detail work is true the mass effect is false. Perhaps, however, there is a place just now for books on Southern life which overemphasize the sordid side of conditions in the South so that they may serve as an antidote to the deeply entranced tendency toward romance and idealization. But while they are valuable as correctives, they are likely to be discounted as literature.

Possibly most of those who are writing realistically of the South is Ellen Glasgow. For many years her work has pointed in the direction of the present trend, but her most significant expression of the new note is in *Barren Ground* (1925) which may be interpreted as symbolizing the South's own escape from barrenness and depression, not through the long-tried medium of romance but through facing reality with vision, industry, and courage. She sees the drab side of life but is not blind to the spiritual, nor is she absorbed with a passion for depicting the sordid. I do not think there is a woman writing in America to-day with so much art, honesty, and insight as Miss Glasgow.

The Negro has come in for his share of attention also at the hands of the contemporary writers. No longer is he merely picturesque story material, but he is regarded as a fellow mortal with complexes of his own to be analyzed. There is on the whole an almost studied avoidance of the "problem aspect" of the subject in the effort to treat the material realistically yet artistically. Sympathetic understanding void of maudlin sentiment characterizes the attitude of most of the younger writers toward the Negro. Stribling's *Birthright*, previously mentioned, was the first novel to appear in the South in which the chief characters were Negroes. One might be inclined to argue with the author regarding the inferences he draws, but the truth of his basic facts cannot be denied. The book was not very graciously received; it was not sufficiently complimentary to the Negro to win applause from a northern public, and it revealed with too much frankness facts that have been long known but not acknowledged to make the

book acceptable to its Southern public. Then, too, the book possessed the usual number of defects that are the lot of first novels. But it remains a significant book because of its position of pioneer in its particular field. It has been followed by the South Carolina Gulla stories in *The Black Border* by Gonzales, *Green Thursday*, by Miss Peterkin, also of South Carolina, and by Dubose Heyward's *Porgy*, the most successful attempt so far in this field and decidedly the most original and finished piece of work which Mr. Heyward has given us. Note should be made in passing of the work of two Negro novelists, Jesse Fauset and Walter White. Their work is being done too much in the propagandist spirit to be impressive and genuine, but it is significant as the beginning of the negro's attempt to express himself in fiction.

Always accustomed to expressing his emotions in song, it is to be expected that the negro's worthiest efforts should be in the field of poetry. Already a number of negro poets have won places for themselves in the anthologies of modern verse by the sheer merit of their work. Among these might be mentioned Countee Cullen, Langston Hughes, and Weldon Johnson. Johnson has led in the movement to substitute for dialect in poetry the idiom and imagery of negro speech, which as John Synge demonstrated in Irish verse offers a far more genuine medium for communicating racial character than the more obvious but less penetrating dialect. The present enthusiasm for the negro folk music, although somewhat handicapped by fad excrescences, is based on a recognition of its genuine art. Every poetic revival is characterized by an enthusiasm for elemental modes of expression and to some extent is influenced by these. The current interest in Negro Folk Song is well timed and may have an effect on contemporary poetry not incomparable to that of the ballad on the English romantic movement. Its rhythms have already affected the verse of the poets of the white race, to say nothing of the work of the Negro poets themselves. Witness the poetry of Lindsay, Stephen Benét, and Clement Wood. Though some of the Negro poets are stripping



their manner of speaking of anything suggestive of their inheritance, the best of them are writing in a style that is deeply rooted in their racial mode of artistic expression. The current interest in Negro song is evidenced by the number of collections which have appeared in quick succession. Outstanding among these have been the First and Second *Books of Negro Spirituals* by J. W. Johnson, *Seventy Negro Spirituals* by W. A. Fisher, *Negro Workaday Songs* by Odum and Johnson, Dorothy Scarborough's collection, and W. C. Handy's *Blues*. The pioneering of work in the field of the spirituals should not be overlooked.

No recent incident so clearly emphasizes the changing attitude of the South toward the presentation of the Negro question as the reception accorded Rogers's play, *Judge Lynch*, which year before last won the prize in the nation-wide little theatre tournament. Produced in the heart of the "Black Belt"—Dallas, Texas,—it strikes at the very root of the lynching evil; and yet its author has been honored by his hometown folks and not persecuted. And now have come Paul Green's one-act plays for the Negro Theatre, *The Lonesome Road*, in a note to which the author voices a confession of wrong to the negro on the part of the white race and a sympathy for him that would have astounded the public of a decade ago.

Less attention than is usual with Southern writers has been given by the present generation to presenting the past. But even in this field the new spirit has been at work. Some of the recent writing of the past, it is true, has continued in the historical romance vein, but much of it is concerned not with re-creating it faithfully, at the same time not divesting it of the romance that is inherent in the very nature of the subject-matter. Of this type is Stark Young's *Heaven Trees*, a re-creation of life on an old Mississippi plantation in the fifties, which gains decisively over the Page plantation stories in its atmosphere of reality yet loses nothing in harm. Though more in the realm of art than literature, Arnold Genthe's *Impressions of Old New Orleans* is important in this connection, for it beautifully preserves for us in photoart the passing French

Quarter, the scene of so much work of Cable, Lafcadio Hearn, and Grace King, who, by the way, has written the introduction to Genthe's volume.

One of the chief causes for failure of earlier Southern literature to develop along sounder lines was the lack of an interpretive criticism and an intelligent, critical audience. Both of these deficiencies are now in a fair way of being supplied. Each year shows an increase in the number of newspapers carrying well-edited literary pages. Outstanding among these is the Book Review section of the Nashville *Tennessean*, edited by Donald Davidson. His weekly *Spy Glass* reveals a steadily developing critical insight. Concerned more particularly with Southern literary movements is the *Literary Lantern* column by Dr. Addison Hibbard of the University of North Carolina, writing under the name "Telfair, Jr.", which is syndicated in almost a score of Southern newspapers. Both in his lectures and in his writings Dr. Hibbard is insistent in his plea for "more criticism and satire as an antidote to the sickly sentimentality of the past" and for sounder standards of judgment in the South. Critical articles by Southern writers in the magazines of the East are almost a monthly occurrence.

The past few years have seen an interesting development in the publication of literary magazines in the South, and although there has been the usual mortality record, they have contributed definitely to the development of talent and have helped to create a public opinion receptive of the new spirit. Chief among these have been the *Fugitive*, Vanderbilt University, which after several years of a brilliant career was temporarily discontinued because there was no editor available who could give his time to it; *The Reviewer* which began at Richmond, was moved to Chapel Hill and expired this past year, its subscription list being taken over by the *Southwest Review* at Dallas, apparently one of the best established of the newer magazines. The *Lytic* of Norfolk and the *Double Dealer*, New Orleans, are devoted almost solely to poetry. A newcomer which has been well launched is the *Virginia Quarterly Review* at the University of Virginia. The *University of North Carolina Magazine* announces its intention of opening its pages to writers outside of

the college community, both those who are already established in the world of letters and new writers who are seeking a hearing. Its aim is "to produce something marked in this part of the South in criticism and review". The SEWANEE REVIEW, which holds the longevity record among Southern literary magazines, past or present, has joined forces with the others in fostering the new spirit in Southern letters. As indicated by the foregoing list, the universities of the South are becoming definite literary centers. The most significant work in this new creative activity of university groups has come from the University of North Carolina and Vanderbilt University.

The work of the poetry societies in the creating of literary atmosphere and in the stimulating of production must not be overlooked. The South Carolina Poetry Society includes in its list of members some of the outstanding names in contemporary Southern letters. Its 1926 Year Book is an inspiring chapter in the annals of achievement in Southern literature. Poetry societies are flourishing in Virginia, Maryland, Georgia, Florida, and Texas, and within the last year or two societies have been organized in Louisiana and Tennessee.

It has not been the purpose of this discussion to give a complete survey of Southern books for the past few years. I deliberately omitted those which seem to carry on the uncritical tradition of the earlier Southern literature; on the other hand it has not been convenient to mention all of those which have been written in the modern vein. In the main I have included only those writings that stand out because of their unique excellence or because they indicate definitely some trend in the development of contemporary Southern letters. In looking over the field as it is at present, I am convinced that there is still too much preoccupation with sectionalism. There is danger, too, of the literature of the soil wearing thin. It is high time that the agricultural principle of rotation of crops be applied to realism, not only in the South but in other parts of the world as well. The soil is beginning to need a rest. I doubt whether the South has lost seriously by her late entrance into the field of modern literature. She has come just at the time that the muddy waters of modern realism are beginning to clarify and artistic values

are asserting themselves. This fact, together with the old culture and the Southerner's instinct for beauty, has kept our writers in the main from perpetrating hideous things like *Nigger Heaven*. Certainly, with one or two possible exceptions, the most finished pieces of literary workmanship in the American novel of the past two years have come from Southern authors. The writers of the South to-day are aware of the present age and its impulses. They are writing in a spirit of honesty and fidelity to their themes, and with artistic simplicity. Thus far they have not found realism and beauty incompatible.

ANNIE C. M. FRAZIER.

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#### WIFE-THOUGHT

It is the same now, it is the same.  
I can be young again; this I can be,—  
Breath over loveliness, wind over sea.  
Summer remembers, and I shall know how  
Leaves bend to purple under the bough.

I can forget him; I can forget  
This hollow-crushed pillow once warm to his head.  
I am a girl lying still in my bed,  
Counting the poplars all silver of limb:  
Knives agaisnt heaven, shining and slim.

No child cries out for me; I am alone.  
My lips to silence sweet in the night;  
The dreams of a girl are mist over light  
One star to my lover . . . bright stars, shine for me!  
(God, he has gone to her: how can it be?)

RUTH LECHLITNER.

## KATHERINE MANSFIELD AND KEZIA

Good guessers moderately informed can sometimes anticipate the advances of science. Their irresponsible forecast has a considerable advantage over painful hypothesis and deduction; for guesses, not without a fair chance of approximate correctness, may easily be multiplied to the heart's content. Nor is there any need to worry about abortive trials, since one lucky hit excuses many failures. So Plato wins acclaim because, writing imaginatively in the *Timaeus*, he made curious analogies to some modern explanations in astronomy and atomic structure. The wildly romantic Jules Verne is not without honor as a prophet of science; and it is tempting to speculate upon the outlook for H. G. Wells in the same rôle. But the consideration of Wells suggests a field less scientifically exact, where the ruminative man of letters has an even greater chance. Thus, foretelling the doom of nations is an old and honored game, one of the few games in which you can't lose. But the strangest, most unaccountable heroes to posterity are those who, having the courage to indulge some taste or aversion or talent quite out of favor in their own day, later step beyond mere esoteric prestige as founders of a cult, and are eventually heralded as great prescient leaders. So Gray came into his own while Romanticism grew; and upon the tide of modern interest in strange psychological twists, the once maligned Baudelaire rides to triumph.

Katherine Mansfield is a prophet, a prophet of children; though hers must still be classed among the number of prophecies as yet unfulfilled. Gray could enjoy the mountains; Baudelaire found interest in the flowers of evil; Katherine Mansfield *respects* children. Like most things under the sun, her attitude is not entirely new, but it is exceedingly rare. Plato regarded children as future citizens, hence material to be worked on by the state. Dickens thought the little darlings should be wept over and gushed about. Booth Tarkington sees them as fitting subjects for humorous treatment. Wordsworth made them the text for a philosophy of life. The modern science of child



study regards them as specimens. But Samuel Butler held that children are human beings, and Katherine Mansfield insists upon treating them as such; notwithstanding our ancient social usage to the contrary. Time was when "John Smith and family" would satisfactorily designate a whole household. Nowadays, "Mr. and Mrs. John Smith and family" will generally do. But in the Mansfield stories each child must be treated separately, and the parents are lucky if they get as much attention as their offspring, or as much respect.

This super-inclusive democracy may seem strange to some readers, but the acceptance of it is not without rewards. Those who have fallen into the habit of looking upon the child's world as a mistake, to be corrected by experience and education, need to learn how many of the solid values of life we adults are missing. When Mr. Burnell goes to work, and when Mrs. Burnell sits down to imagine vain things, little Kezia Burnell walks forth to her life in the garden or by the shore. To stodgy grownups who know what to expect from book-keeping and from house-keeping, this fresh child-life is a revelation.

But Kezia, the essential child, is very near the essence of all life—that fugitive liveness, which generally evades expression. Katherine Mansfield somehow manages to catch the very soul of it in a subtle net of narrative. The little girl's words have been weighed and tested; and only those are set down which are at once typically human and unmistakably Kezia. Trees, bushes, and flowers are seen from her height, and all objects or people are considered from her point of view; while we are with her in the story, the world that we see is her world. Our perception is quickened to the clearness of her keen child-senses; we interpret everything through her child-mind, free, unsuspecting, unafraid, winged by imagination. And yet we stand aside and see her too; though the sight is quite ordinary as compared to our exhilarating participation in her living consciousness. We see her, for example, standing before the window. "She went over to the window and leaned against it, pressing her hands against the pane." Then, coming closer, we feel her own sensations:

Kezia liked to stand before the window. She liked the cold shining glass against her hot palms, and she liked to watch the funny white tops that came on her fingers when she pressed them hard against the pane.

Sometimes Katherine Mansfield seems to slip herself and her readers in among a group of children, taking on the spirit of their thoughts, without adapting the story to the mind of any particular child. A happy instance of this is the play of the two youngsters in "See-Saw". Everything harmonizes so well with their scale that we seem to be one with them. We fit in as the little lamp fitted the doll's house. The small boy and girl seem to have a common mind, a social mind, as it were, and we share it with them. The alternations of play and by-play are as clearly marked to us as to them, though explanations are reduced to a minimum. Thus, when the boy objected,

"Well—where's I to find any sticks?"

"Oh," said she—flinging up her hands—"anywhere of course."—And then she whispered just loud enough for him to hear, "They needn't be real ones—*you* know."

"Ooh," he breathed. And then he shouted in a loud distinct tone: "Well, I'll just go an' get a few sticks."

Again we sense the lapse of the game, in their very own spirit, when she went over to him and touched him with a finger.

"Do you like playing with me?" And he said, in his small solid way, "Yes, I do." At that she flung away from him and cried, "I'll never be done if you keep on bothering me with these questions."

But our understanding of Kezia is far more personal and intimate than this. And her adventures, though simple enough, are broadly human, of the utmost significance. In "The Little Girl", which is the history of her relations with her father, we follow her through the same gropings that exercised the ancient Hebrews in the Old Testament, as they strove to straighten out their religious ideas. It is not without significance that they, too, finished by considering Jehovah as a Father. The saddest part of Kezia's experience was the spank-

ing, but she came through it bravely; even Job could hardly boast a sweeter spirit in affliction.

"Sit up," he commanded, "and hold out your hands. You must be taught once and for all not to touch what does not belong to you."

"But it was for your b-b-birthday."

Down came the ruler on her little pink palms.

Hours later, when the grandmother had wrapped her in a shawl and rocked her in the rocking-chair the child cuddled close to her soft body.

"What did Jesus make fathers for?" she sobbed.

Job's problem has not yet been satisfactorily settled. Neither has Kezia's. One is reminded of a famous passage in Samuel Butler's *The Way of All Flesh*:

Why should the generations overlap one another at all? Why cannot we be buried as eggs in neat little cells with ten or twenty thousand pounds wrapped around us in Bank of England notes, and wake up, as the sphex wasp does, to find that its papa and mamma have not only left ample provision at its elbow, but have been eaten by sparrows some weeks before it began to live consciously on its own account?

If we of the parent-generation are in the habit of looking upon children as the great problem, it may do us good to get this point of view also; to remember that the father and mother problem is as old as the child problem, or older, according to how you decide about the hen and the egg. But Kezia, unlike a great many who deal in problems, did come to a sort of conclusion in the matter. One time her father was actually kind to her. In the night when she was cold and frightened, and there was no one else to do the deed, he took her into his own bed and warmed and comforted her. Then she thought it through all over again, making allowances. And she did him more than justice.

"Oh," said the little girl, "my head's on your heart; I can hear it going. What a big heart you've got, father dear."

And there the author let the matter rest. But I just wonder if what she heard was not, at least in part, the still accelerated

beating of her own frightened heart. And I wonder if the love and care which she so generously credited to him were not also, by pathetic fallacy, a mere reflection of her own feelings as they might have been under similar circumstances, if she had been the father with a little girl to care for. And so I suspect that she created unto herself a more or less imaginary parent, a Keziamorphic father. I wonder, too, if perhaps most of our human blunderings with religion and such things, are not more projections of her simple reasoning.

In "Prelude" we get the very best about Kezia. In the moving day adventure which she and Lottie had with the rude little Samuel Josephs, we see the pride and courage of the child, which is the essence of human heroism. We smile at it, but our mirth is perverse. The seeds of tragedy are there. For all heroism is proud, selfish, deluded, as well as heroic. Falstaff was not far wrong in his rationale of honor and cowardice. But Kezia is far more human than philosophic.

Pooh! She didn't care! A tear rolled down her cheek, but she wasn't crying. She couldn't have cried in front of all those awful Samuel Josephs. She sat with her head bent, and as the tear dripped slowly down, she caught it with a neat little whisk of her tongue and ate it before any of them had seen.

It is not only children who have eaten their own salt tears unseen. The power that broke Katherine Mansfield and killed her at the age of thirty-four, was a lingering, relentless affliction. We see its influence, perhaps, reflected in the cynicism of "The German Pension", but there is no complaint, no apparent weakening. I suspect that, for better or for worse, Kezia came naturally by her heroism.

Of course it is not mere accident that nothing could possibly show off Kezia to better advantage than her very dreadful older sister Isabel. Their mother, who was no fool, knew well enough what was the matter with Isabel. "Isabel is much more grown up than any of us." A childish adult is a bore; an adultish child is a pest. He spoils the fun. He is the typical traitor to his kind. So Isabel:

I don't want to tell you, but I think I ought to, mother, . . . Kezia is drinking tea out of Aunt Beryl's cup."

She has acquired, far too young, a horribly thick layer of sophistication, which in her case means the ability to be as mean as dirt while professing the most angelic motives. If she grew up, she would probably be a reformer—of other people's vices.

Lottie was saying . . .

"I'm going to say my prayers in bed to-night."

"No, you can't, Lottie." Isabel was very firm. "God only excuses you saying your prayers in bed if you've got a temperature."

The little devil! Even the infantile Lottie must have realized, though she yielded, that all this righteousness and mouthpiece-of-deity talk was from no higher motive than the desire to see some one shiver uncomfortably out of bed. But Kezia opposes to such vile adultishness the subtly evasive resistance of eternal youth.

Isabel wheeled a neat pramload of dolls and Lottie was allowed for a great treat to walk beside her holding the doll's parasol over the face of the wax one.

"Where are you going to, Kezia?" asked Isabel, who longed to find some light and menial duty that Kezia might perform and so be roped in under her government.

"Oh, just away," said Kezia . . .

And to what tremendous advantage she went away! To our advantage as readers, that is; for Katherine Mansfield somehow got into her mind at this point and stayed there for two and a half pages almost without a break. It is marvelously fascinating, as we are permitted to think the child's thoughts there in the garden. The words themselves are not hers—the author has helped her to them, as it were—but the selection of objects for emphasis, the point of view, the train of ideas, the emotional reactions—all are Kezia's. In the midst of the passage comes that wonderful surprise which she contemplates making for "my granny," who, of course, will understand as usual and respond with the proper astonishment when she finds in the match box, not matches, but "a leaf . . . with a big violet lying on it." Kezia will never be a reformer; but she has the making of a first-class philanthropist, if her naïveté could be depended upon to last.



That, however, is the very thing which most certainly will not last. The elements of sophistication and the roots of sin are plainly to be discerned in the experiences of Kezia. The most memorable of such experiences was the beheading of the duck. The horrible, hysterical thrill of the sadist, the blighting knowledge of murder, the deeply disquieting consciousness of belonging to a society which subsists by such dark, repulsive deeds—all these sensations overwhelm the soul of the little girl in a great, dark wave. You may be sure that she never forgot, never recovered, never felt quite the same again. At least, that apparently had been the result in the case of Katherine Mansfield, to whom the duck meant murder. It comes out in the story of "The Child-Who-was-Tired"; when the Child finally smothered the baby who perpetually cried, he struggled "like a little duck with its head off, wriggling." We may as well face these dark and terrible truths of life: the dead duck lodged as a grizzly horror in the soul of Kezia, and to that extent at least her innocence was gone. There was something very morbid about the whole duck episode; all of the children who beheld it were deeply and unwholesomely stirred, though of course they little knew the depth of the abyss which they were facing.

"Prelude" ends, as it should, with Kezia. She is in Beryl's room, with a stuffed calico cat and a cream jar—the latter being her Aunt Beryl's. The cat fell over and upset the cream jar.

And the top of the cream jar flew through the air and rolled like a penny in a round on the linoleum—and did not break.

But for Kezia it had broken the moment it flew through the air, and she picked it up, hot all over, and put it back on the dressing table.

Then she tip-toed away, far too quickly and airily. . . .

Poor little interloper in an adult world! We who are older may mess about with the children, upsetting their dearest plans with perfect impunity. But if Kezia breaks our cream jar, she has to suffer for it. Katherine Mansfield at least has no sympathy with this one-sided scheme of things. As the curtain goes down, therefore, it is not Beryl who holds the center of the stage, but Kezia.

And when, in a fresh volume, the curtain rises again, we are "At the Bay". In this story our Kezia is not quite at her best. Somehow it seems as if the more closely knit form of narrative distracts from the spontaneity which characterized her in the earlier work. Then, too, there is an obvious correcting of the point of view. It is apparently the author's intention in both of these long pieces to give us a cross section of society as she knew it. Therefore we find no sharp focus upon one character or one thread of narrative; but a realization of the strange old dictum that all men are created equal. In "Prelude" Kezia had a little more than her just share of attention. Now, then, she is given no delightful excursions alone, but she must take her place with the other children; and for long stretches the author merely talks *about* her, just as she talks about the rest, too seldom taking us into the realms of her very thoughts and feelings. And as a consequence we feel in the reading—we, her old friends—as we should feel if we could stand aside and watch our own selves acting a part.

But in compensation, there is the wonderful little gem of an episode in which we get the conversation between Kezia and her grandmother on the question of death. It ends with a hilarious tickling contest, in which both of them forget the subject under discussion. It is a literary trick, which the author used again, and more effectively, in "The Fly". But we are glad to find here the old Kezia, perhaps the very philosophical essence of her. This grandmother, it should be observed, was to the little girl merely an adequate, sympathetic nurse. The child was the more spiritually sensitive of the two.

In "At the Bay" Lottie steps out from her former obscurity into the limelight of distinct personality. Doubtless there is a great deal of their listless mother in Lottie's make-up. She is the tag-along, the weakling, the "scaredy-cat", the little can't-possibly-do-it of the crowd. Kezia, Isabel having righteous scruples, had to help her over the stile. When they went in bathing,

She liked to be left to go in her own way, please. And that way was to sit down at the edge of the water, her legs straight, her knees pressed together, and to make vague

motions with her arms as if she expected to be wafted out to sea. But when a bigger wave than usual, an old whiskery one, came lolloping along in her direction, she scrambled to her feet with a face of horror and flew up the beach again.

Then when the children played their somewhat unsuccessful animal game, which only Katherine Mansfield's genius could make interesting, she was a donkey "that kept forgetting it was a donkey".

"The Doll's House" is primarily the story of Kezia and our Else, the unhappy, inarticulate younger Kelvey. This child evidently meant a great deal to the author. She has appeared before, I suspect, as the "kid"—who was called Else—in that grim masterpiece, "The Woman at the Store", and again as the nameless "Child-Who-was-Tired". Pitiful as *Oliver Twist*, but without his unaccountable virtue; wild as *Huck Finn*, but lacking his happy callousness—this rat-like, owl-like pariah creature is united to Kezia by Katherine Mansfield's favorite bond—that of a strong common interest or taste.

The other stories abound in affinities similarly established. Thus in "Bliss", seemingly by a strange and mystical sympathy, Bertha Young and Pearl Fulton were both drawn with a deep, ecstatic, but unspoken yearning to the beautiful pear tree. This fact was not without its significance. We are prepared by it to find quite credible the revelation that Harry Young, who had loved one of them, could love the other also. It seemed to follow naturally. In the story called "Feuille d'Album", French, the young painter, watches his fascinating neighbor as she buys an egg. "She picked it out of the basket wasket with such care—a brown one, a beautifully shaped one, the one he would have chosen." After that who can doubt that their love will prosper? In "A Dill Pickle", on the other hand, memories jangle. Though the man and woman both recall the same essential incidents of their common past, each emphasizes very different features of those experiences. But then, that couple never could really get along together. As the man put their difficulty: "It simply was that we were such egoists." In "The Black Cap", the runaway wife considered that if her lover could look at his dreadful cap

and still think himself suitably clad, while to her it was the climax of ugliness, she would do better to return to her husband. In the realm of children, we have the story of "Sun and Moon", where little Sun found at the whole gorgeous concert only one person to his taste.

He was a little grey man, with long grey whiskers, who walked about by himself. He came up to Sun and rolled his eyes in a very nice way and said: "Hullo, my lad." Then he went away. But soon he came back again and said: "Fond of dogs?" Sun said: "Yes."

Of course he said yes! The barrier that generally separates adults from childhood is the barrier of taste. If you like puppies and little birds, if you are fond of ribbons, or if you don't mind tumbling roughly about on the floor, you will find no lack of friends among the children.

As for our Else and Kezia, the bond which united them was the little lamp. Kezia pitched upon that particular object as the supreme perfection of the doll's house. She had her reasons, but, best of all, it was her taste, which is beyond reason. Now, Isabel glowed with the inevitable joy of new and unusual proprietorship, but the charm of the lamp had not conquered her soul. She unforgivably omitted it in the excitement of her description to the children at the school. Even when prompted by Kezia, she entirely failed to do the subject justice, and poor Kezia had to add, upon her own authority, that the lamp was best of all. Then after the other children had seen the wonderful sight,

The one question was, "Have you seen the Burnells' doll's house? Oh, ain't it lovely!" "Haven't you seen it? Oh, I say!"

But when our Else had been through the same experience,

"I seen the little lamp," she said, softly.

And although "nobody had ever seen her smile," upon this occasion she really did smile.

Was it only as the result of her weak and very suggestible nature that she was dominated by Kezia's peculiar emphasis?

Suggestible natures are generally ruled by the strongest influence in their environment; and Kezia was not a strong influence. She was an esoteric sort of child, with a subtle, evasive quality that unsympathetic persons were not at all likely to appreciate. No, our Else's liking for the lamp was probably a genuine personal reaction. Between this forlorn little creature and our chosen heroine there was, then, a bond of common taste, which places the waif high in the spiritual scale; the only scale, in this truly democratic art, that at all matters.

One would like to consider the many other children in the various stories. There would be Helen, the lovely rebel of "New Dresses"; pathetic little Lennie in "Life of Ma Parker"; the only relatively tolerable Hennie, in "The Young Girl"; the very sensitive and Kezia-like Fenella in "The Voyage"; the frail little B. in "A Suburban Fairy Tale", reminding us of Hans Andersen; that young Katzenjammer, Karl Kellermann, in "The Advanced Lady"; the half human, half synthetic Pearl Button, of "How Pearl Button Was Kidnapped"; the unattractive brats, Yvonne and Hélène, of "Pension Seguin"; and ever so many others—little heads that lift themselves in the most unexpected places and then disappear forever. But, one and all, they are so vivid and life-like that they remain indelible in the memory.

At that moment a little girl in a white dress, holding a long, dripping water lily, dodged from behind a bush, stared at them and dodged back again. But he did not see.

Passages like this from "A Dill Pickle" may be found in almost every story. Gathered together, they would make in themselves a remarkable commentary upon the art of the writer, upon the understanding of childhood.

But after all, the essence of the matter is to be found in Kezia. She is the complete child, having whom, we may take the others for granted. And in her, and in the art by which she is presented, we find the best possible summary of the genius of Katherine Mansfield.

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## REALISM AND THE ROMANTIC SPIRIT

The only excuse for writing at present on the relationship of modern realism and modern Romanticism in literature is to present a view of that subject which, for all that has been said, is not, I think, commonly enough held. The usual position with regard to realism and romanticism is that they are essentially opposing movements; or, if some relation other than that of contrast is considered, it is the historical connection of the artistic technique of realistic fiction with that developed in the Romantic movement. The point most in need of emphasis, however, is not the differences, though they are significant, nor the historical continuity; it is the inner resemblance, the sameness of the two things in fundamental attitude and in final effect. Realism is the complement, not the opposite, of Romanticism. It is a change in method, but not, after all, a change of spiritual essence. This position, though not entirely new, is as yet too little known; it is not what it should be, the generally recognized formula to express the ground facts about realism.

The formula used most often in the past, that realistic and romantic are opposing terms, could not be effectively disposed of without infinitely more argument than this paper offers room for. My criticism of it is, consequently, a bare outline, subordinated of necessity to the main point, the cause and nature of the romanticism of modern realistic literature. The obvious way of stating the antithesis is this: realism deals with commonplace events and persons, such as actually exist and could be observed by us in the original, whereas romanticism carries us away to places remote and partly or entirely fanciful. As a corollary to the above, it is often added that realism tends to be commonplace like the scenes it describes, whereas romanticism wears a hectic flush. Even in the bald statement I have given it, this view will be seen to have weight. In the first place, the general aim of those who have called themselves realists or the equivalent has been to present the commonplace; this has been taken to be the meaning of realism, as opposed to any other meaning it might be given by literary critics. And in the sec-

ond place, these presentations have not usually escaped giving us something of the everyday and as we say, unromantic, air which the things presented would have had in real life. And this fact does certainly stamp a realistic work with a well-defined character which romantic works do not possess. However, when we call that character unromantic, we have in mind the subject-matter of realistic literature, not the sort of significance it reveals. And here we make our mistake. For the commonplace nature we assign to the subject-matter is not, properly speaking, the nature it has *in the work of art* at all; indeed, all that has positive, determinate character in art is the completed work itself. Hence we must look at a realistic work as a whole, if we would know its actual character; and here our opinions about its commonplaceness would suffer a check, for art, by virtue of its being outside the practical sphere of mental activity, is not, whatever else it may be, commonplace in the above sense of the term.

More detailed support for this view will be in evidence later, when realism has been defined. But meanwhile, what help do we get from the past in this matter of definition? Efforts thus far to explain realism divide into two parts. For one, defined in terms of the naturalistic philosophy of the nineteenth century, it has been charged with interpreting life in terms of pure animality, or pure mechanism, to the exclusion of any ideal elements. Nothing need be said about this sort of nonsense; we have all heard it. But the other class of definitions offers difficulties not so easy to surmount. This class defines realism as the depiction of things "as they are". The formula at once falls foul of certain verbal criticisms. If "as they are" means merely that the subject-matter of realism is the scenes and affairs of actual life, then the phrase tells us next to nothing. If it means that the realistic artist suppresses his personality, his feelings, his biases, his temperament, or what you will, then an attempt at a fundamental definition has been made, which, however, is founded on an unsupportable notion of psychology. Freedom from temperamental bias cannot be used to measure realism, because a man who did not possess any temperamental bias could not be

an artist at all. The impersonal attitude is a myth. The "nature" of any object, as a realistic artist perceives it, is the effect of the outer appearance of the object on his emotional system. However closely he may seem to have followed the actual outline of the object, his never-quite-conscious æsthetic sense has guided his hand in subtle alterations which take away from it not its mundane identity but its mundane effect. It is no longer the object which the artist saw; it has been transformed by his intuition. A slant here, a coloration there, are the result of the inevitable operation of the artist's mind on what he sees. However, the phrase "things as they are" is not without its virtues, although those virtues are not obvious until the true basis of the realistic idea has been expositied.

That basis lies in romanticism; and therefore we need to remind ourselves of what view has been taken of romanticism that has made realism seem a thing apart from it. The view is, of course, familiar. We may find it well put by Faguet, in his study of Flaubert:<sup>1</sup>

The basis of Romanticism is a horror of realism and an ardent desire to escape from it. Romanticism is essentially romantic; it does away with observation, which means submission to the real object, and with Reason, which merely starts from reality and then patiently deduces clear ideas still resembling reality in that they are clear, and showing in the concatenation given them by reason something of the monotony of real things. . . . To free oneself from the real by means of the imagination, and also by retiring into the lonely sanctuary of personal sensitiveness—here lies the real basis of Romanticism for all time.

This expresses perfectly the feeling common in the critical mind of the immense difference between the airy, sentimental introspection that prevailed when the Romantic movement was at its climax, and the clear, uncolored objectivity of Flaubert's practice. But the definition is, at bottom, unfair. Romanticism, all in all, is not an escape from reality—not even when reality means daily circumstance. And realism, all in all, is not an escape from personal sensitiveness. The best, hence

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<sup>1</sup> Émile Faguet: *Flaubert*, p. 31, English tr., 1914.

the most significant, examples of both reveal observation of reality adequate to the subject, and at the same time, a personal sensitiveness amounting often to idiosyncrasy. On the one hand, there is no lack of solidity in the poetic imagination of Shelley; and on the other, nothing could be more clearly the result of personal sensitiveness than the way in which Flaubert holds himself aloof from all the unrestraint in human feeling and all the excesses of ugliness in circumstances, softening them and rendering them less pungent by his attitude of cold-blooded calm. We need, then, a broader definition of romanticism than Faguet's; one which does not take for the essence what is a frequent but by no means inevitable result of the same. This essence will be found a highly abstract conception, yet not too difficult to see and pin down.

For most of us the earliest associations of the word romantic are certain narratives packed with adventure, mystery, thrills, and characters possessed of idealized mental processes. Later, when we are more sophisticated, we apply the term to Wordsworth, to Carlyle, to the *Rubáiyát*, to the modern French "symbolists", and so on. A little after this, we make the observation that such philosophers as Schopenhauer and Nietzsche were, after all, romantic poets in disguise. What is the common element in these types of men and things, which makes us put them all under the same label? We can see that at the end of the list we have wandered rather far from the adventurous stories which embodied our first notions of the romantic. Yet in another sense, we feel, we have not wandered so far, after all. There is not so much difference between Sir Walter Scott and Friedrich Nietzsche as to overpower a certain feeling which they both impart to us of romance, even in our common notion of the term. Just what does romance consist in?

What it consists in, may be roughly defined, in a word, as mystery.<sup>2</sup> But it is more than simply the presence of a little understood object, or the occurrence of a little understood event. It is such a presence or occurrence plus a special interest in the fact that it *is* little understood. We find, whether in life or in

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<sup>2</sup>Cf. Walter Pater: "Postscript", from *Appreciations*, p. 246, 1915 ed.

art, that any object of attention always escapes complete analysis. Actuated by a universal desire for intelligibility, we try to put our experiences into as large and coherent a system of concepts as possible. The instinct of self-preservation impels us to be as clear as we can about the nature of things and our relations to them. And clearness here means, in the last analysis, conceptual pigeonholing. What we cannot give any name to, we know nothing about. However, our definition and classification of an object is always incomplete, and always relative to some particular limited aim; we are always confronted by a residue of something unintelligible and mysterious, which never fails to remind us of its mystery. When we are in our ordinary frame of mind, we attend mainly to the understood and conceptualized aspect of things, first, because only these aspects have practical value, and second, because from a practical viewpoint we get nothing but discomfort from regarding a mystery. It is when we take a contemplative and disinterested attitude that we find unintelligibility good to attend to. Curiosity then overcomes fear; we find in the unknown a source of interest. But more specifically, we may, if we choose, find a source of interest in the very fact of the unknown's being unknown.

The possibilities of such a viewpoint for sentimentalism are fairly obvious. Indeed, it is just these possibilities that have furnished points of attack for critics like Faguet. But the attacks are generally unfair to romanticism as a whole. The romanticist has not necessarily lost his desire to understand things; he has not necessarily forsaken rational thinking, or turned aside from the universal search for order and clearness in the world. All he has necessarily done is, to recognize the existence of some sort of reality which shows him that the search is to be in some way unsuccessful, a reality which overshadows and makes small his notions of the nice balance of the elements of life. In this recognition lies the essence of romanticism.

Romanticism as a literary tendency, however, always shows this essence not pure but in a complicated form attached to specific objects of interest. For the essence considered apart from that which contains it is a pale abstraction. We are



interested, rather, in romantic *things*. It will be necessary, then, to consider what were the things in which modern romanticism interested itself—or more specifically, what were the leading ideas to which the romantic sensibilities of people attached themselves. But I intend no exhaustive analysis; it will be enough to start conventionally by alluding to the two main currents generally recognized—on the one hand, the interest in the past, in things remote and strange; on the other, a reawakening of sympathy with the many complexities of nature and human nature which pseudo-classicism had ignored. But attention must now be paid to the second of these, for there it is that the artistic philosophy arose which, as I see it, lies at the root of modern realism.

The "back to nature" tendency, although its development into realistic literature came late, was one of the very first features of the romantic revolt. It shows itself most obviously, perhaps, in English poetry. The early English romantic poets, in defiance of Pope, announced their intention of observing and recording physical nature, not in the light of pseudo-classic conventions, but in its own real beauty. Scenic description was not taboo to the classicists, but in it nature was subjected to the modes of thought and feeling acceptable to the classic mind, centered as it was on the idea of man in a well-regulated system known as society, and quite unaware how complicated, how puzzling, how ill regulated, after all, society really is. Pope's delineation of natural scenery shows little evidence of his having gone out into the country with an unbiased mind and let the scenes he beheld mean what they would to him. But it was just this unbiased attitude that the romantic poets insisted on taking. The first consequence, of course, was an awakening of interest in the strange and remote. As has been remarked, the scenery of the early romantic poets is largely twilight scenery. For their revolt against the precise orderliness of classicism could not help being also a revolt against its mundane everydayness. But what they sought was not the strange and remote, but expansion. Classicism had made man's world small; Romanticism aimed to expand it indefinitely. But the most obvious means of expansion was to yield freely to the sense

of the infinite; or, changing the figure, to let the infinite with all its variety of meaning infiltrate into one's sensibilities. This means looking at things, not with the bias of a preconceived notion of how they ought to be, or what they ought to mean, but in an impartial frame of mind in which the impressions of things may be noted as they actually come from without, studied on their own account, and thus made to reveal a significance which could properly be considered as coming from the things themselves. This viewpoint might be described as objective, in a sense that it posits a world of objects outside of man, the meaning of which he does not control within his inner consciousness, but rather, to which he must turn if he would understand what his very inner consciousness signifies. Objectivism, in this sense, the Romanticist regarded as the proper artistic attitude for man to take toward his universe, whatever metaphysical speculation might have to say on the point. Said he, we must keep our eyes on the things we are studying; we must see their nature as it really is, not as some bias of convention tells us it is.

But this objectivity in Romanticism was essentially romantic in the sense in which I have previously defined that term. It was an interest in twilight aspects, not merely of landscapes, but of all experience. And this was not due merely to the reaction from the artificial glare of classicism, but proceeded also from the nature of the objective viewpoint. An object looked by itself, as a thing, an individual in space, is always shrouded in mystery. It is isolated, and this fact of isolation makes the thing, in the last analysis, unintelligible. Understanding, whether for the everyday man, the artist, or the philosopher, means putting a thing into a system of relations large enough to cover the problems raised in connection with the thing, and seeing the thing in its place in that system. Hence, phenomena viewed *as such* have to the reflective consciousness an air of mystery about them. Of course, the mystery is not complete; a phenomenon, to be an object of attention at all, is already to some extent systematized. But if its individuality is to a certain person the important thing about it, then to that person it is framed by the darkness of unintelligibility. In short, objec-

tivism was an adventure—a perilous voyage on a sea of phenomena perplexing in their endless variety and confusion, in their elusive shades of meaning and half-meaning.]

What I am trying to show here is the really close spiritual connection between the most obviously romantic parts of Romanticism and those less obviously so. Objectivism was the main notion, after all, to which the specific bits of romanticism attached themselves, even those bits which are usually called subjective rather than objective. [The sentimental sensitiveness of Romanticism in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was objective in the sense that it treated mental states as phenomena isolated from an orderly system—it was interested basically in individual feelings for their own sake. But the important point for this study is not that the romantic writers were objective, but that the objective writers were, even when they seemed otherwise, really romantic in an acceptable, though not perhaps usual, sense of that term. I mean to say that Romanticism does not include only grandiose sentimentality, personal sensitiveness, excitement over the weird and exotic, or the mystical view of physical nature. So that instead of setting up romantic and realistic as mutually exclusive terms, we should see in the latter an extension and altered application of the elements of the former.

We are all willing, I think, to let Flaubert be the model realist—not because there are no other ways than Flaubert's of writing a realistic novel, but because there are no ways of becoming more completely saturated with the moody objectivism which is the common element of modern realists. We may pass over the usual verbal criticisms of Flaubert's theories. What is important about those theories is, that they show that Flaubert realized what an artist may know of life if he lets its ordinary affairs appear to him in their own actual shapes, and speak to him in their own language. His method has been called plastic realism; and if his method was such, it was because his æsthetic sensibility was plastic too—because it accommodated itself to the shapes of things—because the rapt contemplation of these shapes absorbed all its energy.] The result of this absorption is a very clear impression which seems

to stand in midair. The intellectual clarity of Flaubert's narration leads to nothing intellectual at all. It gives us a reaction to the externals of the scene; but when we try to formulate a significance for these externals, we find ourselves balked by an obscurity which defies penetration. This is not to say that the story lacks point, nor that it is so told that it cannot be oriented to our ordinary ethical and practical judgments. Indeed, in *Madame Bovary*, nothing is clearer than Flaubert's opinion of his heroine. Yet that opinion is nowhere obtrusive; moreover, it is more like a rule-of-thumb discovered somewhat by accident than a conclusion from deep-founded universal principles. Flaubert does not want us to reflect on the location of the hidden springs of conduct. To do this would be the objectionable "interpretation". It would render our minds less plastic, less able to recognize and feel. The hidden springs may exist, but that is irrelevant. Our interest is to be in following the curves of the surface streams, pondering their unsymmetricality, their capriciousness, realizing them as facts, but being neither able nor anxious to make them "mean" anything.

This extremism of Flaubert's is, of course, not entirely the logical issue of the principle of objectivism, but, like any other artistic method, a matter partly of individual temperament. There are as many varieties of realism as there are realists. What we need to understand is their basic point of agreement, the objective way of looking at things which is the foundation of the artistic fabric.

The grand point of realism is that "things as they are", the plain facts of actual existence, can be seen, when reflected in the artist's mind, to possess the very deepest of æsthetic meaning. These "plain" facts are so described by us because we, as average persons, are wont to consider them in a practical light. We usually think of them in respect to their biological, economic, and moral relations to us; in fact, we scarcely notice them at all unless they affect us in one of these relations. To be sure, there are exceptional moments. When the New Yorker reflects upon his city and pronounces it a masterwork of civilization, he is not thinking merely of how much wealth it has, how well its skyscrapers are built, what conveniences it

holds for comfortable living; he is also impressed with a vague feeling that here is something significant, not just in an abstract way expressible by some concept, but in a way that touches his whole stock of feelings and volitions—a significance which he cannot explain, but which is there all the same. But such impressions are for most of us haphazard and obscure, and we make little of them. It remains for the realistic artist to discover how much they may be made to show, if only regarded in the right way. [To him, the objects and events of daily life are transparent; beneath their temporal nature he sees what they fundamentally mean to the intuition. What the realist does is to reveal that meaning to us by giving us the actual with a certain slant. His method is concrete, more so than that of non-realistic artists, because he keeps together in his expression the whole of existence. It is precisely the connection between life as it is reflected on in the inner consciousness and life as it is actually lived, that he is most aware of and that he wishes to keep intact. The inner truth is revealed in outer semblance; but more than that, it *inheres* in outer semblance. And by portraying that semblance, as aforesaid, with a certain slant, the realist aims to give us a view of existence from top to bottom.]

It might be objected here that to realize the æsthetic significance of everyday things is not the peculiar function of the realist, but is rather a characteristic of all artists. Anyone, no matter what his artistic purpose may be, must learn of life in the same way—namely, through reflection on actual experience. Artistic truth does not emerge spontaneously from a mystic void in the artist's inner consciousness; it comes only after a contemplation of the things about him, and the significance of the æsthetic vision cannot avoid being linked with these things. Hence it is only of minor importance whether the artist chooses to present the informing details as they really exist, or to transform them into an imaginative world of his own. This objection needs considering, because it has been widely used, in one form or another, by critics who prefer to slight the distinctions between types in art in favor of the similarities. Three answers may be given. First, it is not at all obvious that every



artist past or present has appreciated the conditions of his æsthetic knowledge as described above. It has often been held that art was the efflorescence of some quite internal part of the artist's mind. Second, artists in general have not subscribed to the belief that *all* experience has potential æsthetic meaning. Third—and most important for the purposes of this study—the objection assumes that the difference between realistic and non-realistic art is one of presentation—of “mere” presentation, some of the objectors would say. But this in turn assumes that some *thing* is presented in one way which might be presented in another. Here we have the notion of a content, which is necessarily abstract, being moulded into a form—a notion which modern æsthetics has little use for. An artist does not take an abstract something and put it into a concrete form; his material is a mass of intuitions, and his activity amounts to the same thing. Hence, it *does* make a difference whether the artist has realism or non-realism in view, for if his initial intuitions develop in the one direction rather than in the other, the resulting art work, looked at as a whole, is a quite different object from what it would have been in the other case, hence conveys a quite different æsthetic fact. The distinction, then, is more than one of “mere” presentation. [My previous statement that to the realist the objects and events of daily life are transparent, is possibly misleading—it is, at any rate, if it suggests that those objects and events have no importance for the artist. I should say, rather, translucent; for even if we regard inner truth as shining through, we must recognize that it does not emerge in a pure state, but is greatly modified in the passage.

The manner of this modification might, for lack of a better term, be called a kind of symbolism. In the realistic artist's mind, events in concrete experience have a certain intuited meaning; they are outward signs of the basic forces at work in life. But they are signs essentially with reference, not to life as analyzed and turned into abstractions through philosophy, but to existence as a concrete whole. Hence their meanings are not concepts, or anything that can be framed in words, but rather, intuitions—revelations through intellect, feeling, and

volition all together of a reality which by virtue of its concreteness is not comprehensible to intellect alone. Such a reality we often speak of as underlying experience; but if it is to justify its description, it must be not underneath, but inherent in, the actual. As I explained previously, our ordinary practical attitude toward the things about us prevents us from getting that intuition of them which is for us their significance and their reality; it lets us see in things only a significance which is abstract and æsthetically lifeless. It is the reflective consciousness to which is apparent the sense of something vital, something in which the vague and obscure trends of feeling and desire are clarified—a sense not reducible to concept, and expressible only as beauty—which sense is the revelation of concrete reality. But this revelation is not rigidly bound to the actual. To be sure, it comes from contemplation thereof; but once received, it may be applied in the construction of objects and incidents of pure fancy. All artists create dream worlds of their own, the realist no less than the Arcadian lyricist; and the fact of remoteness from the actual does not involve a falling off in the sense of concrete reality. The world of Shakespeare is no less “real” than the world of Ibsen. The difference between them is this: in Shakespeare, the high degree of transformation of actuality into fancy removes the dream world a long way from everyday existence, and in so doing prevents feelings of commonplaceness from entering into the scheme, and results in the impression that the artist has got rid of mere surface aspects of nature, and has discovered its essences; whereas in Ibsen, these same surface aspects obtrude themselves to such an extent as to seem like a veil over the inner truth which he is supposed to reveal. A world of fancy always seems to us to be “inside”; hence, treating the figure as fact, we suppose it to be close to the “inner” truth of things. Realism, then, is indirect in its message. In fact, its message depends upon our seeing the inner truth through and in the outer semblance. We must take the commonplace, in all its commonplaceness, which does not escape us even in contemplation, and see it to be representative of something fundamental. The objects about us become symbols in realistic art; they stand for things quite basic in existence.

This realistic symbolism differs from symbolism in the usual sense in two essential respects. The first is obvious. By symbol we usually mean a thing to which a significance is arbitrarily attached, and which, when used in a certain arbitrary manner, delivers that significance to a percipient. The thing and the significance are separate; the latter is tacked on, and does not belong to the intrinsic nature of the thing—does not arise out of the appearance of the thing itself. Hence, the significance is not understood unless it is explained beforehand, or unless the thing is put into circumstances such that the meaning is somehow implied. But in realistic symbolism thing and significance are not external to one another. The significance is got by looking straight at the thing, by regarding it as an individual object which by virtue of its being such has character, or meaning. The symbol and what it means are the same thing. The only justification for the use of the word "symbol" is, that there is a disjunction between the objects of ordinary experience considered as ordinary and as concrete realizations of the meaning of the world, and that these objects taken in the first consideration are not in our minds identical, or even immediately connected, with that meaning, so that an object considered as ordinary may be regarded as symbolic of something which underlies it and is different from it.

The second of the differences between realistic symbolism and true symbolism is, that in the latter the meaning of the symbol is a general concept or a system of concepts, whereas in the former no concept can cover the whole meaning of the symbol. A fable argues a moral proposition; the characters therein stand for types, or for abstract forces in society. The incidents of the story stand for something else. Both characters and incidents can be reduced to general terms, and their essential significance thus explained. But in a realistic narrative, while some element may justly be considered to represent a general notion, and may, indeed, be frankly allegorical, the *essential* meaning, the real function of the element in the narrative, is not to be found in any concept, but in the maze of intuition from which concepts spring. Thus, a character in a modern novel may be interpreted as an emblem of a peculiarity of

human nature; but though the character is thereby explained as a piece of symbolism, this explanation does not show what he is as a piece of *realism*. The meaning of a realistic symbol is a true æsthetic intuition, a compound of concept, feeling, volition—something far too concrete to be made explicit in the abstract framework of a medium, therefore revealed only by suggestion.

The romanticism, then, of these symbols is unescapable. In true symbolism we focus our attention on the thing the symbol stands for, hence that thing is of reasonable size, and the symbol is insignificant by contrast. But in realism our attention is on the symbol itself, so that the contrast between the symbol and what it represents makes the latter an overwhelming bulk beyond the power of reason to encompass. We see the symbol clearly; but if we ask what it means, the only answer available is a response of feeling, definite at first, but becoming less tangible the more completely we try to grasp it. So what seems a very ordinary object in experience turns out, when we try to realize it as part of a cosmos, to be a most absorbing puzzle.

It is necessary to distinguish between realistic romanticism and the other, more commonly recognized, kind, which might be called pure romanticism. They are the same fundamentally, but that sameness, however basic, does not prevent the things in their concrete entirety from being of very different tone. Superficially, the difference may be called one of subject-matter. Pure romanticism gives us things remote from our own experience, and such things, by reason of their remoteness, carry no suggestions of the commonplace and practical, hence readily induce our disinterested imaginations to operate on them. But in a realistic work the material is something near home, something which, if we have not seen it ourselves, we could see if we wished, and which consequently reminds us of its commonplaceness even in the moments when its deeper significance is most clearly seen. Pure romanticism takes us *out* of actuality; realistic romanticism takes us *through* it. Where the pure romanticist takes the direct and obvious route to the unknown, the realist follows a roundabout path which gives him in the end a different view of the destination. The two may exist side by side in the same work, and indeed are often so found in the works of writers not as rigorous

as Flaubert in their philosophy of fiction. Joseph Conrad, for example, is a realist (excepting for obvious romances like *The Arrow of Gold*); his characters exist, they are real persons, drawn without falsification of psychology, and moreover, with an objectivity as clear-cut as Flaubert's. But in his background-making he takes, as he chooses, the liberty of insinuating a subdued metaphysics which, without impairing the sense of actuality in his character-drawing, adds a fantastic color to the whole design. The sea is Conrad's chorus. In it and in places about it he sees the inscrutability of life revealed; and his descriptions are penetrated with symbolism. To take another example: the later dramas of Ibsen are essentially realistic in execution; but, whereas in *Ghosts* the effect of the unreal weirdness at the close is actually the outcome of the intensity of the realism, in *Rosmersholm* Ibsen finds it convenient to use a piece of pure romanticism—the White Horse—to add color, by means of the fantastic, to a subject otherwise slightly dull. We all admit the romantic touch in the second instance; but we should discover it also in the first.

Realism is romantic through a sort of double process. First, the incident of ordinary life, in the artist's imagination, becomes a thing of mystery, and then, the contrast between the incident as we see it ordinarily and as it is interpreted by the artist is a puzzling affair. In a realistic work we see the actual and familiar as we should see it in life; but around it is a haze which alters its aspect so as to make it seem full of a hitherto unguessed meaning, and yet strange and not quite intelligible. It is like dreams we sometimes have, where we meet people we know very well, and find them acting and talking in a way curiously out of keeping with what we had supposed their natures to be. Such dream incidents startle us because we contrast our knowledge of our friends in waking life with their astonishing performance in the dream. Just so do we contrast the familiarity of the incident in realistic art with the surprising character of its revealed meaning; and the incident has a quality not unlike the unintelligibility of a dream, because its meaning and its familiarity persist side by side in an opposition that is never resolved.

If, then, the realist chooses to deal with things as they are, it is not from a desire merely to create a picture, but



rather because after a long time of looking at things as they are he has discovered some significance, perhaps definable only as an impression, which he feels that he cannot set forth without loss unless he reveals it through the scene in which it had its origin. But more than this, the scene must never lose its feeling of actuality; for the character of the æsthetic impressions of realism depends on the percipient's conviction that he is looking on things that *are*, not on things that are fancied. Success in this matter is only relative. When we read a novel we see, obviously, not real life but an imitation in the true Aristotelian sense. The material of the book cannot but be transformed in the writer's mind, and the feeling of actuality is owing to the writer's having restored, after the transformation, such elements as suited his purpose. No *ultimate* realism is possible. What we call by that name is a comparatively close approach to the ultimate, actuated by the intent to be as objective as is consistent with the needs of art. But the objectivity is not impersonal, and it does not lead to the same result with everyone who uses it. Flaubert's delicate reserve is as unlike Dostoevsky's startling exposures of human feelings as anything could be. Yet both are undeniably realists. And in both, objectivity leads finally to the dark void before which all profound romanticists find themselves pausing. With Flaubert, the void is seen as a nicely modulated agnosticism; with Dostoevsky, it is an emotional background intense and somewhat chaotic, often, as in *The Brothers Karamazov*, taking on the weirdness of a nightmare. To be realistic, then, is not simply to be romantic; it is to be romantic in a certain roundabout way, which way is a negation of the methods of the romanticism of the capital R which dominated literature a century ago. The romanticism which retires into Faguet's "lonely sanctuary of personal sensitiveness" was tabu to the realists, not because personal sensitiveness was absent, but because it had had enough, for the time, of lonely sanctuaries, and wanted a new discipline.

HOUGHTON W. TAYLOR.

Austin, Texas.

## ROME

### I

#### THE SPHINX

Mysterious Rome, the mistress of the past,  
Land of rude Cato, Cæsar's conquests wide,  
Imperial eagles that must droop at last  
Before barbarians' swift on-rushing tide ;  
Or Rome, the sibyl of the Middle Age,  
Its rapt ecstatic visions, reveries,  
Home of the priest, the mystic, and the sage,  
The classic pillars propping Holy Sees ;  
Or Rome the heart of all the world we know,  
The gay Italian of a later day,  
The harried tourist with his troubled brow,  
A pilgrim over seas' unquiet way.  
Not one, but all,—grey ruins and green vines,  
And age-old prophecies sounding in these pines.

### II

#### THE TOURIST

Museum corridors, the crowded throng,  
The hurrying, wistful faces, worn and strained,  
Who reach at last the goal they sought so long,  
When Rome was a bright vision unattained.  
With well-thumbed guidebook, seeking history  
Of that Apollo standing so serene,  
So unconcerned with those who come to see  
His classic grace, his poised and golden mien.  
Without, through open windows comes a flash  
Of green, cool gardens, cypress' gracious lines  
So delicately etched—the fountains' plash ;  
Rome woos us with innumerable signs ;  
O weary traveller, calm your troubled brow,—  
Let the true Rome breathe on your spirit now.

CHARLOTTE F. BABCOCK.

## AMERICAN CRITICISM TO-DAY

One of the most encouraging signs of the times in the world of literature is the present-day boom in literary criticism. Twenty-five years ago criticism in America was the least important and by far the least read of literary forms. It was practised almost entirely by college professors and novelists retired on pension. A volume of criticism was as profitable to the publisher as a commentary on *Revelation*. No one but special students ever thought of reading the stuff. Not that there was no good criticism being written; but its importance, outside a very restricted circle, was practically nothing.

Times have changed. We have to-day three weekly literary journals of importance—*The Saturday Review*, *The New York Times Book Review*, and the *Herald-Tribune Books*. We have three exclusively literary monthlies—*The Dial*, *The Bookman*, and the *International Book Review*. We have a whole army of magazines devoting a considerable part of their space to criticism—the *Atlantic*, the *Mercury*, the *Century*, *Harpers*, to name only the most important. But this increase in the amount of literary criticism written and published is only an indication of the increased importance of the art. The public is reading criticism. In 1900, there was in America only one writer of importance who was a critic and nothing else; and his reputation was very limited. I mean, of course, James Huneker. To-day probably the most influential writer in the United States is Mr. Mencken, who, likewise, is a critic and nothing else. And besides him, there are at least half a dozen other men with large reputations built purely on their achievements as critics. Decidedly, the art flourishes.

It is high time, therefore, for persons who are curious about literature to begin taking stock of this body of writing. What are its characteristics? Who are its chief practitioners, and what are its chief tendencies? What does it amount to, and what does it promise for the future?

First of all, it is a fighting criticism. Bricks are flying, clubs are thumping, heads are broken, and statues of the gods of old

are overthrown. Now this condition, though deplored by kind-hearted critics of the gentlemanly school, is excellent in itself. Great criticism is always militant; a great critic must be a fighter. Arnold, Dryden, Brandes, Sainte-Beuve, Hazlitt, Poe, Lessing—each has waged his war and killed his man. In present-day American criticism, amid all its welter, companies stand face to face. There are the ultra-conservatives—Irrving Babbitt, arch-enemy of Romanticism; Paul Elmer More, scholar and gentleman of the true eighteenth-century type; Brownell, acid and severe. Since the death of its greatest leader, Stuart Sherman, this group has been largely silent, but they are men to be reckoned with in any survey of living American literature. At the other extreme are the high radicals, led by Mr. Mencken—a treacherous leader, whose delight it is to face about now and then, and demolish his own followers. With him are grouped the inseparable George Jean Nathan, Gilbert Seldes, Burton Rascoe, Hartley Grattan, Floyd Dell, and a host of lesser lights. Between them, facing now one way, now another, is a third party, composed largely of professional scholars, some of whom have fled the campus—the Van Dorens (Carl, Mark, and Irita, respectively), Pattee, Canby, Spingarn, Lewisohn. Well-informed, cautious by training, catholic in sympathy, but inclining generally to the radical side, they endeavor to maintain some sort of critical balance in the midst of the row. Yet they can strike a good blow on occasion; Professor Pattee's *Call for a History of American Literature* is as radical and iconoclastic a piece of criticism as any of the young journalists has produced.

And iconoclasm is one of the pronounced qualities of this new criticism of ours. Our critics have burst into the Temple of Fame and made sad havoc among the statues there erected. Dreadful has been the destruction among the American "classics" of the last century. Beginning with John Macy's *Spirit of American Literature*, iconoclasm has become the fashion. Longfellow is down, Howells and Lowell are tottering on their pedestals. The gentlemanly reticence of Stedman has disappeared from American criticism. We call a spade a spade. We applaud when Macy declares that Lowell was "an extraordinarily brilliant snob", or when Mencken states that "the

truth about Howells is that he had nothing to say." These iconoclastic critics sneer at Tennyson and Browning, Dickens and Thackeray. They begin to find Ibsen preachy and prosy. They insist on proving all things. Now in all this there is, no doubt, a great deal of mere iconoclasm for the pleasure of hearing the smash. There is also a good deal of mere parroting. There are fashions in heresies as in orthodoxy. But it is in general a healthful sign.

Along with this iconoclasm goes a general scepticism of literary dogma. In the past, criticism has usually been founded on a solid basis of doctrine. Aristotle had a creed, and so did Coleridge, and Arnold, and Poe, and Brunetière, and Taine, and Lowell. The eighteenth-century critics had a complete Summa. But our American sceptics are as doubtful of doctrines as of reputations. Professor Spingarn devotes an essay to proving that the "laws of the theatre", as expounded by his colleague Brander Matthews, are nonsense. Mr. Mencken lays down in one volume a theory of criticism, and two years later announces that he was wrong; that there are no theories of criticism. John Macy goes him one better: criticism, he declares, is merely a "game". Ludwig Lewisohn destroys our time-honored definition of tragedy. Worst heresy of all, Cabell takes a volume to tell us that our realism is stupid and unliterary. Amid all these sceptics, the few conservatives, who actually have a doctrine and who follow it, are in a hopeless minority.

But scepticism, while it begins in attack, ends in paralysis. One direct result of our destruction of all literary doctrines has been a curious timidity in dealing with contemporaries. We are afraid to call a book bad. Here, of course, Mr. Mencken is the exception; but Mr. Mencken's readiness to condemn is due to the profound classic foundation which underlies his radical antics.

A more hopeful characteristic of our day is the wide-spread interest in literary backgrounds. We are all followers of Sainte-Beuve nowadays: Huneker made us that. Criticism in the last century had a strong tendency to treat literature as something existing in a vacuum. This tendency finds its extremist



expression in Poe, who wrote about books as if they were merely so many pieces in a sort of literary chess. The tendency exists, moderated, in Lowell; with him, a book is a book, to be considered largely without reference to its author, its age, or its reader. There is much to be said for this view of literature; it was best said by Matthew Arnold, in his famous warning to students to beware of the "personal" and "historical" estimates. But nowadays we are quite as much interested in "the men who make our novels" as in the novels themselves. Maurois's *Ariel*, I am confident, found many readers who have never looked into *Prometheus Unbound*. Hellman's *Irving* overshadows the Irving of the *Sketch Book*. Battles have been fought, and deadly wounds endured, over Stevenson's early amours. But although this interest in literary biography leads a good many literary dilettantes away from literature itself, it is in general a healthy interest.

Nor does this kind of interest stop at individual biography. We are becoming more and more curious about the wider backgrounds of literature—especially of American literature. And this interest is a highly critical one—destructively critical, for the most part. Many of our best critics are actively engaged in investigating the history of American culture; investigations that usually end in satirical comments on the past American scene. Preëminent at this work has been Van Wyck Brooks, whose work has profoundly affected the subject and method of the *Main Street* school of American fiction. All through American criticism of the present century this tendency runs; it makes up a large part of the work of Sherman, Randolph Bourne, Harry Hansen, Mencken, Carl Van Doren—but the list is endless.

Charming qualities, these, but with them there needs to be another, the lack of which has injured much good criticism in the past. Many exceedingly great critics of the past have had exceedingly little scholarship. Hazlitt was shockingly and unashamedly ignorant. Arnold's injustice to mediæval literature was largely the result of the gaps in his information. No critic of the present day with Whipple's meager equipment would venture to write a *Literature of the Age of Elizabeth*. The level

of general critical information has raised immensely. And this is true, not only of the professional scholars, but of many of the high radicals. Mr. Mencken's anti-pedantry is almost a mania, yet he is in his own erratic way a scholar through and through. There have been few critics in any age with Carl Van Doren's unusual combination of minute scholarship and freshness of opinion. Even the glib and debonair George Jean Nathan knows the theatre and its literature, from *Æschylus* to O'Neill. Under certain surface differences in manner—differences which at once strike the eye, but are by no means fundamental, he bears a strong resemblance to the man often taken for his very antithesis—Brander Matthews. It is, indeed, this very depth of scholarship which causes the iconoclasm and dogmatic scepticism which we have noted as among the marks of present-day criticism. The ignorant mind is the garden of dogmas.

These, then, are the qualities of our new American criticism. It is now our task to see how well Mr. Drake's volume<sup>1</sup> illustrates them. In his preface, Mr. Drake emphatically states that "these are not the best critical essays of the year. They are merely those essays which have given the highest degree of pleasure and the most definite impression of general appeal and permanence of interest." But even though we may not demand that they be the best, we have every reason to expect that a volume bearing this title will be in the highest degree representative. And in general it is.

Here at the head of the radicals is Mr. Mencken once more, with a surprisingly sound and sympathetic discussion of the late Barrett Wendell, into which is inserted that anathematization of the Puritans which has become a necessary part of the Menckonian ritual. His followers fare less well. Robert Duffus on Dreiser stands well enough for the radical taste, but he lacks the usual radical vigor. Gilbert Seldes is more characteristic, but Waldo Frank's bit is tame. For the conservatives appear Professor Tinker of Yale, with a sensible attack on the excessive

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<sup>1</sup>*American Criticism*, 1926. Edited by William A. Drake. New York: Harcourt Brace and Company. 1926. Pp. 368.

use of the biographical method; Arnold Whitredge, and Agnes Repplier—amiable light-weight. In general, however, the volume seems to me to have failed to catch the prevailing controversial tone of present-day criticism at its loudest and shrillest—and most amusing. Iconoclasm likewise has little place here, unless we consider Edmund Wilson's attack on nearly all living American writers except E. A. Robinson and Edith Wharton a specimen of that class. But here is scepticism, in W. B. Presse's "Of Critics and Hens." Here is the biographical interest in Guerard's "Anatole France" and Carl Van Doren's discussion of Melville. Here is the study of backgrounds carried on by Canby and Sinclair Lewis and Edgar Lee Masters and Cameron Rogers, even pushing beyond the confines of literature proper in P. W. Wilson's "Cavour." And here is criticism become self-conscious and surveying its own fair features in Mary Colum's "Stuart Sherman." As for scholarship, that pervades a good half of all the articles in the book.

On the whole, it is a fair showing that our new American criticism makes in these pages. That the publishers find it worth their while to put forth such a book as this—literary criticism, supported by the prestige of no great names, without the text-book appeal, but contemporary criticism for a general reading public—is one of the most encouraging signs of the literary times.

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## BOOK REVIEWS

ULICK AND SORACHA. By George Moore. New York: Boni and Liveright. 1926.

To read Moore's last three novels, one must have leisure and patience. And by this time it must have struck his critics as strange that a man who, as they say, wants so badly to confess his sins to the public, does not serve them up in the sort of dish which the public will passionately devour. When Stuart P. Sherman called Moore an "æsthetic naturalist", he must have meant, if he were not using words loosely (as he so often did), that Moore saw life as a spectacle, frequently a spectacle touched with the mean, the sordid, and the dismal, but always a spectacle from which the artist could derive a vision of beauty. The spectacle of life included, unfortunately, the private relationships of his friends and his own intimate experiences; these things were always so impersonal with Moore, so much the stuff for the artist, that he was astonished when his friends complained of the use he made of their secrets. His own moods and relations were to him things "out there", which he always treated objectively; his most intimate writing never becomes a "salt-smelling excursion into a languid soul." He sees whatever presents itself with an artist's eye, and transposes it carefully into his exquisite, finely wrought prose,—not easy reading, for sometimes Moore is dull (in spite of his occasional satyr's leer) and sometimes he confuses the reader by lack of paragraphing and of quotation marks; but never without distinction and beauty.

As in *The Brook Kerith* and *Heloïse and Abelard*, Moore reaches far back into the past for the story of *Ulick and Soracha* and relates the adventures of Sir Ulick, son of Richard de Burgo, who sails for France with his harper Tadhg to follow a career among the trouvères and make known the Irish harp to the world. Or, to speak more accurately, it is the tale of Tadhg, who, separated from his master at the abduction of Soracha, wanders in Scotland and Ireland until fate brings him back to Sir Ulick. When Moore's characters are disappointed in

their loves, they become religious fanatics; and so Ulick has at the death of Soracha taken to madness and prayer until the white spirit of his lady calls him into the waters of Lough Carra. The last eighteen pages of the novel exhibit the eighty-year-old Tadhg lapsing from grace for a moment of timid paganism, which is developed with a good deal of humor and a sly return of the old Moore.

Tadhg is pictured with nearly enough energy and penetration to make him a convincing character, the finest passages being the account of Tadhg's flight from Scotland with his pet goose Maria, and his travels with her through Ireland until she is clipped by a fox. This portion of the book is related with a surprising force of imagination, with a touch of humor, with feeling, and yet without a touch of sentimentality. So extremely well is it done that the reader is inclined to wish Maria might have been introduced sooner and might have survived longer, for the other characters are indeed a ghostly band, faintly delineated, living in shadows that are pierced only infrequently by the light. We know nothing of Soracha (although a few details of her personal appearance are given) except a brief conversation with her reported by the artist Roudier:

"The woman is never the same as the girl," she said, breaking into speech suddenly. "We make promises that we cannot fulfill, or fulfill indifferently. And until the woman within her dies, every nun dreams of being carried away. She knows that she will be buried in her habit, but she puts a taper in her window and lies down watching it, uncertain whether she would follow the knight if he came, only certain that she is guilty of a sin in putting the light there, though it lure nobody. She falls asleep watching the taper, and finds the charred wick in the morning."

And this, we must admit, gives us a type rather than an individual. When Ulick acts, we know so little of him we are surprised at the suddenness of it.

The characters are weakly conceived; there is little intensity or passion, and reading is often tedious. That "Aristophanic joy, or at least enjoyment of life", that "unfailing liveliness" which Walter Pater admired in Moore, is, except



in the last few pages, altogether lacking, and in its place we have a slow-moving pastoral that abounds in conventional description, on the whole tepid and impersonally intimate, with recurrent epithets as: "the comely poplars", "the spare, stunted pines", "a spruce, taut ship"—a sketch in shadows tinged by Irish history and mythology, by religion, by the tradition of the *trouvères*.

Because Moore himself is represented as telling the story to a young friend seated on the bank of a river, we expect an exuberant tale showing, as Moore put it, "the spoken word more buoyant and joyful but less precise and complete than the written word." We do not expect gusto, for he distrusts extreme vivacity as mere trickery. Of Fielding he says in *Avowals*: "He writes with gusto, a quality we seldom meet with in modern literature, perhaps because we are becoming more thoughtful; and he keeps it up like an actor who knows he is playing in a bad play." But what are we to think when the whole work stands without energy or sprightliness? Moore hastens to assure us about the effect of a good story-teller:

. . . . Timothy's blarney was so soft and winning that his hearers lifted their heads to it, happy as the flowers themselves when the south wind is blowing.

Precisely that is our feeling after reading the novel, as if we were an ancient gentleman who "sits by the fire and thinks what his . . . past has been", reposing in the calm of uninterrupted musing. Except for Tadhg's senile sensuality, the novel breathes a simplicity that is touched with the more-than-sweetness attributed to Timothy's discourse.

Moore does not care for *Tom Jones*. He says of it in *Avowals*: "In *Tom Jones* we are in a fieldless, treeless, flowerless planet; but even Fielding's indifference to nature would not matter if the book were not passionless. . . ." Now it is certain that Moore is not blind to nature, but it is equally certain that very few scenes in *Heloïse and Abelard* or in *Ulick and Soracha* are firmly conceived or vividly expressed; they are not individual; it is as if Moore carried about a general stock of nature supplies in his pockets and scattered in a bit here and there

whenever he feels the story needs intimacy or a touch of the soil. He seems to be aware of the existence of blackbird, marten, gull, cormorant, woodcock, plover, lark, wren, rook, snipe, heron, hawk, eagle, raven, jackdaw, and thrush; and he is fond of referring to the oak, pine, poplar, ilex, aspen, lime, apple, the hazel copse, thistledown, juniper bushes, blackberry bramble, hare-bell, daffodill, lilac, snow-drop, crocus, mint, water-cress, and damson. He has unquestionably observed nature, but nature in his latest novel is suspiciously like nature in *Heloïse and Abelard*.

Let us pause before we misunderstand one another. However true it is that Moore gives us nature generalized, nature diluted (and his reason, perhaps, lurks in the musings of Tadhg: "... For what is more like one hill than another hill? or one bit of forest than another forest? There's a great sameness even in rivers, all green and slow at the edges, with a stickle in the middle"), yet it is not true that it is without life or charm. There is a fragrance in one of the most conventional bits:

I walked in Courancy with thy mother, Ulick, and can see the village plainly in my memory on the sunny hillside amid apple garths in flower and in sight of the silver Seine doubling again and again round poplar-lined fields.

But this is far from being the best, for many descriptions combine simplicity with a faint touch of Celtic magic:

A fine autumn smell there is about this wood, master, of nuts, toadstools, hips and haws, dead leaves and berries, and following a smell of ripe fruit they came upon brambles laden with blackberries. Never till to-day, said Tadhg, have I seen nuts and blackberries ripening together, and it was surely the last fifteen days of fine weather that brought us this juicy second crop.

"I have a genius for intimacy," Moore has boasted, and not unjustly. And in *Ulick and Soracha* there is, not the intimacy of his *Confessions of a Young Man* or *Memoirs of a Dead Life*, but a more subtle, a lurking warmth that curls between some of his lines and a humanity that flashes out from a speech and as suddenly disappears. There is a nice intimacy in the last clause of Ulick's speech:

Such stories are sad, but lose some of their sadness when told on a lovely autumn morning on steps above an orchard, when damsons are darkening in the branches and the mint bed loses its scent, and the season of pork in all its multiple varieties is about to begin.

But there is the quiet, dignified humanity of the simple man in Tadhg's delicate suggestion that Ulick make a full confession before he goes into battle, and in his answer to Ulick's protests (the paragraphing is mine):

"And what put that thought into thy head, Tadhg?"

"My own sins."

"Thy sins!"

"We all have a few, your honour."

If anyone doubts Moore's power to present a man with humor and understanding, let him read of Tadhg's dilemma, in which his patience at having aided in Ulick's amorous escapades while he was a *trouvère* is endangered by his pride in the fact that his harp was a great reason for his success.

Mr. James Branch Cabell has been granted a mystic insight which enabled him to discover how Moore puts together a sentence: it is all a matter of sprinkling in "and's" and so stretching out a simple notion interminably; the vocabulary of Moore is inadequate and the result is a style too flat to attract the discerning reader. Admitted, Moore is seldom clever or brilliant. His nearest approach to cleverness may be illustrated by a description of Soracha.

Longer, slenderer hands I have never seen; her soul is in her eyes, but some of it seems to have trickled into her hands.

Or by Tadhg's description of his silent tongue:

Like an eel under a comfortable stone it has been for the last four miles. . . .

But to complain that Moore's language is simple is like complaining that the Bible is not written in the language of Sinclair Lewis or of Henry L. Mencken. A mellow beauty lies in the style of George Moore, in its very simplicity. Take a remark by Alec:

The best stories are hatched out of old memories. . . .  
An old dog for the road and an old memory for a tale.

And no one but Lady Gregory has understood and has been able to render the rich beauty of Irish dialect so well as Moore does in *Ulick and Soracha*, where the narrator, describing Timothy, says:

A great talker he was surely, the best that was ever heard in Mayo, saving your presence, Alec.

Sometimes as we read Cabell and try to put down the uneasy feeling that he is himself there, grunting and sweating under the lines, we are rather grateful that Moore does not make the effort to be dazzlingly clever. After the shaggy horrors of *Elmer Gantry* or *The Sun Also Rises*, Moore is a heaven-sent relief. His style is consistently fine, easy and flowing in these last three novels, polished and yet simple. Whatever one may think of Moore's position in literature, one cannot, as Pater once wrote, doubt the essential fineness of his literary faculty.

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THE ALLINGHAMS. By May Sinclair. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1927. Pp. 368.

TO THE LIGHTHOUSE. By Virginia Woolf. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. Pp. 310.

These two novels invite comparison because they are both studies in family relationships, and because in their approach and manner they are so different. *The Allinghams* portrays one of those delightful English families, familiar to us in such novels as *The Hounds of Spring* or Miss Sinclair's earlier *Tree of Heaven*. Each one of the six Allingham children is individualized from the outset, and each is carried into the crucial years of life and love. With so many heroes and heroines, the story lacks the concentration of Miss Sinclair's recent studies of a single character. Nor is there one dominant motive, but rather an interweaving of several themes familiar to her readers. The hereditary neurotic strain works itself out in the lives of the

children, impelling one to drink, another to madness, a third to poetry, but the others are untouched. Parental stupidities, too, condition some of them, but all save one escape frustration and find fulfillment in love. In her sketch of the poet whose search for beauty leads him to love of woman and at last to love of God, Miss Sinclair merges her familiar theme of the genius with her later philosophic idealism. Like most of her later novels, this story tells itself largely through skilful dialogue, but with few of those sharp staccato thrusts that laid bare the very souls of Mary Olivier and Harriett Freen. On the whole, *The Allingham*, readable as it is, brings us no new tidings of Miss Sinclair's mind or art.

*To the Lighthouse*, on the contrary, is difficult reading; indeed there are Proustian sentences in which Mrs. Woolf seems to be trying to make language do the impossible: to present everything at once. Yet out of the seeming welter, there emerges a memorable personality.

In this picture of a large family party spending the summer in the Hebrides—parents, eight children, assorted guests—most of the children are mere names. The whole story is focused on Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay—their relations to each other, their influence on the others. And it is Mrs. Ramsay on whom the whole book converges—just as in the marvellously imagined scene of the family dinner, it is Mrs. Ramsay alone whose power of sympathy merges all those separate beings into a group, composes their discords into harmony, creates of their fragmentary moods a moment complete and beautiful as a work of art. That scene with Mrs. Ramsay's spirit first mingling with it, then hovering above it, serene, resting on "the thing that endures"—on eternity, that scene is the climax of the book. What follows is aftermath; the passage of ten years over the empty, waiting house, the death of Mrs. Ramsay (told in a casual parenthesis), the return of the survivors, the effect on them of Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay—above all, of Mrs. Ramsay. The re-creating of Mrs. Ramsay's influence through the imaginations of the child and the guest who were closest to the secret of her creative power, the culmination of Lily's vision of Mrs. Ramsay—"it was part of her perfect goodness"—sitting



knitting in her chair as she sat when the story opened—all this, though finely wrought, seems something of a *tour de force*. The life of the novel has died with Mrs. Ramsay.

"To the Lighthouse"; the expedition, planned by Mrs. Ramsay, longed for by her little boy, frustrated by Mr. Ramsay's cruel prediction of bad weather, forms the opening episode. And to the Lighthouse Mr. Ramsay goes at last, in memory of her desire—the Lighthouse that had been through all the years part and symbol of her inner happiness.

"Pray heaven that the inside of my mind be not exposed!" So pray Mrs. Ramsay's guests, and well may they pray! For *To the Lighthouse* is a notable contribution to that "understanding of Mrs. Brown" which Mrs. Woolf once defined as the aim of the novel.

F. W. K.

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THE ORPHAN ANGEL. By Elinor Wylie. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. 1926.

This is an age of the pursuit of "Souls"—damaged or otherwise. Our immortal dead have been not only analyzed and psycho-analyzed in the "new biography" but created in such imaginative fusions of fact and fiction as *Glorious Apollo* and *Ariel*.

*The Orphan Angel* is different—and daring. To bring Shelley literally to life, to rescue him from the storm-beaten Mediterranean of July 8, 1822, set him aboard a Yankee clipper, transport him to America, and send him forth with his sailor rescuer and comrade David on a search for a forlorn maiden that carries him afoot from Boston to San Diego—here surely is a venture to test the courage and the imagination of any novelist.

Elinor Wylie's novel achieves its rare distinction on two counts: the conception of its hero, and the manner of its telling. The Shiloh (he bears no other name) of Elinor Wylie is neither the slight, satiric sketch of Peacock's *Nightmare Abbey*, nor the pathetic, slightly absurd, defeated sprite of M. Maurois's winsome study. Shiloh is fearless, impulsive, part child, part angel. Twice we see these two struggling within him. Once in the

crucial decision whether to go on to his dream-love Sylvie or turn back to the waiting Mary in Italy, the child and the archangel wrestle, and the child prevails. But in the last temptation when he has reached Silvie, the archangel sets him free from passion and pain. To David, he seems "something beautiful and good", whose rescue atones for the killing of the sailor Jasper. And so the spirit of Shelley, after his life-long struggle to be free, lives again in a new world, setting free the hearts of men: an angel indeed but not, *pace* Matthew Arnold, an "ineffectual angel".

Across the motley, many-hued American scene he moves, a radiant spirit of good-will and eager friendliness, with "eyes of burning and incredible blue". From the sailors in the fore-castle of the *Witch of the West* to the stalwart blue-blooded mountaineer who begins by trying to shoot him and ends by offering him whiskey, men respond to him with their best. And women—frail Melissa, proud Rosalie, wild Anne—women love him at a glance. "She had never beheld such another. . . . A live man, or the mortal image of an angel; his eyes were like blue thunderbolts against her soul." Sometimes passing unsuspectingly, once escaping thankfully, more often pausing pityingly, Shiloh moves onward with the devoted David in their fantastic quest, their search for Sylvie, sister of the ship-mate whom David had killed. Their idyllic wanderings to the Mississippi, their desperate adventure of crossing the desert: capture by the Indians, rescue from burning at the stake, tortures of thirst, lead them at length to the Sylvie of their desire. How Shiloh meets his greatest peril, makes his great refusal, and finds his lonely peace, the story itself must tell. Shiloh, "the orphan angel", becomes at last the embodiment of Shelley's own creed of all-enduring, all-conquering love.

Elinor Wylie knows her Shelley sources to the least detail—the freckles, the paper boats, the "well-peppered mutton chop", even the name Shiloh that Byron used. Her America of 1822 is vividly and, on the whole, convincingly pictured. To be sure, David's Maine dialect reeks somewhat insistently with "by graminy" and "tarnation"; and one often shares David's impatience with Shiloh's too ponderous speech, as when, half

drowned, Shiloh can utter such phrases as, "I am about to solve the great mystery of dissolution". But accuracies or inaccuracies such as these are small matters compared to the sustained imaginative quality that makes the manner of this book worthy of its matter. By its strange, deliberate beauty, *The Orphan Angel* is lifted out of the actual into the imagined. Elinor Wylie writes as one poet to another.

"To whom it may concern", this fantasy is dedicated. It echoes the "devout affection" that is expressed in the same writer's poem *A Red Carpet for Shelley*.<sup>1</sup> To other lovers of Shelley it speaks appealingly.

F. W. K.

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THE REBELLIOUS PURITAN: PORTRAIT OF MR. HAWTHORNE. By Lloyd Morris. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1927. Pp 362, and Index.

From the point of view of imaginative and scrupulous truthfulness, the best poetry, dramas, novels and short stories of our day will compare favorably with the best of the past. Of course we cannot make the comparison unaffected by our own participation in the world-view that the best literature of our day expresses and helps to determine. But it certainly seems as if an honest, clear mind, unconditioned by the particular stresses and warpings of our time, would likewise find in a few plays, poems, short stories and novels of to-day an almost unprecedented courageous and imaginative truthfulness. More unquestionably such a mind would recognize superiority in that respect in the best contemporary biography. At any rate, if I had the chance to test my somewhat optimistic theory before some eternal critic, among ten or twenty specimens I should offer Lloyd Morris's portrait of Nathaniel Hawthorne.

*The Rebellious Puritan* would be a good sample, because of its differences from most of the new biographies, as well as because of its resemblances to them. It does not risk too much on imagination—it does not re create the life and times speculatively. It does not risk unfairness for the sake of giving contemporary readers a smug feeling that

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<sup>1</sup> In *The New Republic* for January 12, 1927.

the reverences of their parents were bamboozlements. It does not replace hero-worship by hero-baiting. In avoiding idealization it does not belittle real virtues or magnify ironies into a suspiciously coherent mockery. *The Rebellious Puritan* does not lend itself to a disposal of all the perennial questions by substituting negative answers for the too simple, scared affirmatives. The hands of Lloyd Morris neither cling nor fling.

I should use *The Rebellious Puritan* as a sample of the superior imaginative truthfulness of contemporary biography because what you get from it is a trustworthy and agreeable intimacy with Nathaniel Hawthorne. The point of view of the writer is neither obtruded, nor pretentiously suppressed. The book is both scholarly and artistic, therefore, not scholastic, and not egotistic. Mr. Morris has none of the distrust of his own investigations and discoveries which betrays more anxious writers into a tiresome display of proofs of thoroughness. And the writing, both in respect to large scale structure and in respect to rhythm, language and re-creative power of images, is strong and delicately deft.

Scarcely a repetition mars the book, and there are no needless amplifications or fatuous interpretations. I particularly respect the dexterity with which the apt selections from Hawthorne's journal and his and Sophia's letters are stippled into the portrait. And I admire the mastery of perspective which enables Mr. Morris to define and relieve his picture by the ample, interesting use of Hawthorne's family, the events of his time, and his contemporaries.

One demurrer is demanded by my affection for Emerson: I think Mr. Morris is a little summary in his treatment of what, following a convention of our day, he lumps, or puffs, together as transcendentalism. Emerson was a more substantial and more trustworthy man than Lloyd Morris seems to think, if you ask me. But Mr. Morris himself is by no means indifferent to significance that *transcends* explanations. If he were, he could not have portrayed so living, so pitiable, so admirable, so unique, so representatively human, and so real a Nathaniel Hawthorne in *The Rebellious Puritan*.

Mr. Morris has achieved and shared with his readers a substantiated intimacy with a man who though "apprehensive of experience" resisted the influences of his time that offered escape into abstractions; a man who in spite of the contemptuousness and occasional harshness of his attitude, incident to an innate feeling of superiority that he could never fully validate, was so kind and honorable and mysteriously lovable that his friends were always ardently attached to him; a man who, though he damned, drank deeply, smoked, played cards sometimes for money, chewed tobacco in his youth, and hated work and struggle, always seemed to his ultra-refined associates, and was, a sort of seraph; a man who though sceptical of all reforms, reasserted influentially the rightful place of whim and enjoyment in life, and, seeing difficulties the more acutely perhaps because he was looking for excuses for inertia, taught some of his fellow Puritans that "we all go wrong by a too strenuous determination to go right"; and a man who, though nearly blind himself to the nature and motive of the non-literary arts, helped a little to relax the rigor of his countrymen and so prepared for a slight æsthetic quickening in America.

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SHAKESPEARE STUDIES: HISTORICAL AND COMPARATIVE IN METHOD.  
By Elmer Edgar Stoll. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1927. Pp. 502.

In his *Shakespeare Studies*, Elmer E. Stoll has given us the fruits of over twenty years of thoughtful, eager study in the richest of all fields of English literature. For the last decade he has justly been regarded as one of the leading Shakespeare scholars in America. The present volume includes two new essays, and such careful revision of others that the whole presents a lively, highly significant piece of work which, without radically altering the author's reputation, should materially enhance it.

Professor Stoll holds such dogmatic opinions of the dramatist that we are ourselves likely to hold only less positive views of his criticism. Two tendencies go far to explain the peculiar



qualities of his work. In the first place we may safely conclude that the chief motive behind his writing is not a desire to clarify what he may regard as hidden depths of the poet's genius, but a desire to destroy what are to him exasperating errors in the critics. And secondly, that he invariably selects the more probable side of a dilemma, and then proceeds to make the better reason appear better than it really is.

In his first chapter Professor Stoll contends, chiefly on our meagre biographical evidence, that Shakespeare was unconscious of his own skill. Of the flood of evidence to the contrary clamoring for admission, the author says next to nothing.

His second chapter deals with the general problem of how faithfully literature "reflects" social life. He takes the side now much in vogue, that art is closer to dreams than to history. The argument is stimulating, but hardly convincing. Once more the critic appears on the better side when in Chapter Three he argues that Shakespeare's figures should be regarded as dramatic illusions rather than as real persons. He holds their principal actions to be unnaturally motivated; but finds that each character achieves a unity through speech and tone. The latter conclusion he reiterates but never expounds.

Chapter Four is devoted to vigorous but somewhat broad and obvious contrasts between the tradition of Shakespeare and that of Molière. Here as everywhere he describes Shakespeare as the popular playwright, a native mind, without "ideas" of his own, always "simple and sincere". Professor Stoll's theory of Shakespeare may be expressed in a nutshell as genius simplified for the use of the poor.

The critic makes a strong case for the objective reality of the ghosts, yet makes the case simpler than some of his readers will think warranted. The same holds in principle for his scholarly study of Shylock. His essay on Falstaff is the most disappointing in the book. Professor Stoll writes eighty-eight pages virtually on a single phase of this figure, makes the better reason (that the fat knight is a coward) better than it is, and neglects the real wealth of the creation. A dry sermon on a moist theme!

In his study of the criminals he is undoubtedly right in his major contention: that Shakespeare's figures do not resemble the criminal of to-day. Yet he fails to observe important implications which follow from the fact that Shakespeare deals here virtually with moral ideas, not with men and women. The critic also takes imperfect account of mediæval religious psychology, apparently forgetting that the English tragic poets viewed the Italian Renaissance largely through mediæval spectacles. Although Professor Stoll has throughout his book amassed much striking evidence to valuable effect, many persons will regret that he should suggest the mind of the "popular playwright" more nearly to resemble the worn sixpence with which the London citizen bought admission to the theatre, than the opalescent wonder that will forever puzzle and delight mankind.

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LUCIAN, SATIRIST AND ARTIST. By Francis G. Allinson, Litt. D. Boston: Marshall Jones Company. 1926. Pp. 204.

This volume is an unusually interesting and convincing one in a series which has, I think, fully justified our expectations. The interest is attributable in part to the author's comprehensive and sympathetic presentation of his subject and in part to the very fascinating character of Lucian.

We realize, as we read, that Lucian is not of the great literary Olympians, and yet we are ready to accord to him a conspicuous place in Greek literature. In the days when Greek had fallen as far as possible from the classical heights, in the second century of the Christian era when the world was under Roman sway, a Syrian, taking Plato and Aristophanes as his patterns, not only wrote a pure and flawless Attic Greek but created, in the Satiric Dialogue, an effective and vital literary form. A truly Herculean task and an achievement unparalleled in the records of literature!

As interesting as the man is the age into which he was born,—the age of the benignant Antonines in which took place the first Greek Renaissance. What a storm of conflicting creeds

and philosophies the age presents: Stoicism, as it were, the Established Church, close pressed by Platonism, Aristotelianism and Epicureanism; the dissenting Skeptics and Cynics, barking cacophonously in the offing; Christianity, the religion of the "Crucified Sophist", working its way slowly, irresistibly forward in the face of persecution and abuse. Across these stormy heavens flashes the comet of the brilliant Syrian satirist who brings to bear a mordant and merciless wit against shams, inherited or new; against contemporary philosophies, against pretenders, adventurers, parasites; against superstitions.

The author presents without compromise the shortcomings of Lucian. He was not constructive in either philosophy or ethics; he failed often to distinguish between the willful liar and the misguided fanatic; he was often carried away by personal enmity. If he had any creed at all, it was probably in closest sympathy with the *ἀταραξία* or "imperturbability" of Epicurus. In the "Hermotimus or the Sects", written in his maturity, Lucian utters his "Confession of Unfaith." Keep sober and remember to doubt,—such is his conclusion.

And yet withal, Lucian was a genuine literary artist and a stimulating critic of human life. As such he has enjoyed a steady popularity and has exercised through some of his works a notable influence. The favorites have been "The True Story" and the "Dialogues of the Dead". Add to these the "Lie-Fancier", "Charon", "The Cock", "Timon the Misanthrope", and you have a choice selection representing his best style in narration and dialogue. "Life's End of Peregrinus" will always be interesting as a contemporary epitome of the Christians: "misguided persons who have persuaded themselves that they are going to be altogether immortal . . . who have thrown over the Gods of Greece and have done reverence to the crucified sophist."

In the last chapter Dr. Allinson estimates the debt of subsequent ages to Lucian. Precariously popular in his own age, outlawed during the Middle Ages, he comes into his own with the Renaissance, Erasmus being his sponsor to that age. No writer of satire, apparently, is without his obligation to Lucian, and other great ones, not satirists, have turned to him for

inspiration and suggestion. Rabelais has been called the "reincarnation of Lucian's spirit of mischief"; Voltaire, "the Lucian of the eighteenth century"; Swift, "the most Lucianic of all Lucian's legatees." To one who knows his Lucian, it is not difficult to follow the never-failing stream of his influence as it flows on and on and bears eloquent testimony to the vitality and the worth of this rare literary character.

H. M. G.

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CREATIVE OXFORD: ITS INFLUENCE IN VICTORIAN LITERATURE. By William S. Knickerbocker. Syracuse: University Press. Pp. 223.

To show how, from the fertile soil of a reawakened Oxford, sprang a series of movements in which "sentiment for *genius loci* was elevated to an articulate plane", how Oxonians sought to project "the spirit of their *alma mater* in various intellectual movements of their day", and how thereby Oxford regained its lost prestige, is Dr. Knickerbocker's aim in *Creative Oxford*. It is true that the desire for expression proceeded from the controversy over the function of Oxford between "Liberals who sought to enlist the aid of Parliament in Oxford reform, and Conservatives who vigorously opposed them"; yet the writer is too far impressed with the dignity and seriousness of these movements which gripped the hearts of the noblest Victorians, to interpret them as protests, as stabs in the back of rationalism. Instead, they are the unfolding of spirits mellowed by the calm beauty of the scene, the wooded hills, the winding Isis, the gardens which struck Henry James as "the fairest things in England and the ripest fruit of the English system"; of spirits quickened by an inspired study of Aristotle and by contact with some of the best minds in England; of spirits deepened by their "eager and passionate devotion to the Catholic concept of Oxford and their delight in ecclesiastical art, types of which they saw all about in Oxford."

Just what is the "Oxford touch"? It was lacking in the eighteenth century and it entered literature concomitantly with romanticism. It was a quality nourished in the "air just thick with arrested voices", in a region where, as Henry James found,

"all of the echoes of the general life arrive but to falter and die." But if it grew in seclusion, it did not thrive in tranquility. In fact, it was the discovery that "seldom since the days of its origins has it [Oxford] been as agitated as it was in the nineteenth century", which led Dr. Knickerbocker to investigate the reasons for the restoration and "to indicate the nature of Oxford's influence by briefly reviewing the experience of some of the more outstanding Victorian writers who, however diverse may have been other and later influences, were profoundly conditioned by it during undergraduate days."

This review of Oxford in the nineteenth century shows a succession of movements and philosophies, some linked together in almost a causal chain, many as divergent as the tempers of Benjamin Jowett and John Ruskin, showing strange affinities, and, though springing for the most part out of conditions and moods peculiar to Oxford, yet resembling marvellously the movements that were stirring all England. Not from the hard-headed matter-of-factness of the utilitarians but from the *Logic* of Aristotle, studied carefully and revitalized by a group of Oriel fellows, proceeded the rationalism of the Noetics, which influenced Newman "and supplied him with a flaming sword of logic which he wielded to protect his sensitive soul in its retreat to that ghostly world of angels in which he came in the course of time most vividly to dwell." With his faith in the Bible as supreme authority nicked by the blows of his own scepticism, Newman fell back on the Church tradition for support in which he hoped to find a logically impenetrable mansion for his mystic soul. Tractarianism broke down the isolation of Oxford, and its most powerful opponent, Thomas Arnold, continued precisely the same work, emphasizing the relations of the individual to the Christian State rather than to the Church alone, or to the State alone.

In High-Church dogma, which fascinated Newman, is implied a principle of history, an assumption that history is a continuous process in which the mind of man is revealed in a series of attitudes that strike out toward a full interpretation of the universe. Such followers of Newman as Mark Pattison were far more interested in the historical principle than in dogma.



Matthew Arnold, apparently so far in spirit from the Tractarians, may well have been impelled to his liberal cosmopolitanism by contact with their historical views; it is unquestionably true that Jowett was the man to introduce the philosophy of Hegel, for the atmosphere of Tractarianism in which he had breathed and his own thorough study of Plato prepared him for Hegel's philosophy of history.

Generally the Tractarians were awake not only to spiritual beauty, but also to the physical beauty of Oxford, the abiding place, to them, of "sweetness and light". And so the influence of Oxford moulded Ruskin, for it "had awakened in him a passion for beauty in painting and architecture; and the romantic poets, to whose excessive sensuousness Arnold was considerably hostile, developed in Ruskin a delight in landscapes, sky, wind, rain, and sun. What Ruskin did, therefore, was to amplify and give body to Tractarian and romantic desires for natural beauty and to make the pursuit of art a religious occupation." The descent from Ruskin and Jowett to the sceptical æstheticism of Swinburne and Pater is easily traced.

But the point is that these movements were related because they were all attempts to express something of the spirit of Oxford; these exponents cast their eyes upward to the same heaven, and even when they appeared to be at swords' points they were not hopelessly at odds. It is not a paradox to say that there is a narrower gulf between Newman and Matthew Arnold than there is between Bentham and John Stuart Mill. At times these Oxford movements did come to blows with the philosophy of utilitarianism, the economics of big business, the principles of current political theories, and the religious scruples of the majority; but only in their secondary aspects. They were the unfolding of spirits impassioned, but not with anger; of men alive to the drama of the moment and inspired with a desire for positive expression, not with petty annoyance that their positive convictions were being damaged by the Utilitarian monster. In short, they were creative, they were positive attempts at expressing Oxford and Oxonians at a period when Oxford was struck by the impact of a greater variety of powerful influences than had ever been working in it before. And

in insisting on the creative power of Victorian Oxford, Dr. Knickerbocker has demonstrated his understanding of the artist's view as well as the scholar's.

A second distinction which raises *Creative Oxford* out of the class of mere scholarly exercises is its clear perception of the nature of movements. Now movements become something of more than academic interest when they are conceived, not as the intertwining of so many dried reeds of philosophy bound together by the vines of logic (a tangle for metaphysicians to unravel), but as the efforts of a group of men to establish a feeling or conviction which has burned more fiercely within them than in their contemporaries, whether or not they are fully conscious of its import. The conception is revealed, it is criticized until it is no longer strictly individual, it acquires the momentum of group enthusiasm, it strikes a note, resonant or not, in the minds of the populace whose function it is to imitate or adopt; but in all these steps the driving force is likely to be a unique personality rather than an idea, so that the proper approach to a study of movements is biography instead of (in its strictest sense) philosophy. Dr. Knickerbocker writes with a finely tempered enthusiasm of many of the Oxford leaders, presenting Newman and Arnold especially in sketches that, though brief, are remarkably vivid and sympathetic, and showing that men are influenced by the friendships and aspirations of men far more than by neat syllogisms. Newman, "eminently an artist who was dissatisfied with half-formed ideas and could not rest until they were expressed in clear and cogent form", "a mystic thrown by force of circumstances into a society of logicians and rationalists", is presented with all the charm of his personality, so pervasive that his influence could not but have affected even his enemies.

*Creative Oxford* is written forcefully and well. It is penetrating, and it is based on a very extensive scholarly investigation,—which, curiously enough, might constitute our main criticism against it; for in a few places the book is suggestive where one would have desired more explicit information. It presupposes in the reader a certain knowledge of the back-

ground, and the sometimes abrupt introduction of names gives a telescopic effect to the whole. But that was necessary from the fact that the period covered is extensive and the space limited. There was need of such a book as *Creative Oxford*, and Dr. Knickerbocker has given it to us in a form that deserves reading.

EDWARD N. HOOKER.

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TAR: A MIDWEST CHILDHOOD. By Sherwood Anderson. New York: Boni & Liveright. 1926. Pp. 346.

There are varieties of indolence. The common American variety shows, it seems to me, in cutting Gordian knots when we really need to find out how the knot is tied. We are lazy in our haste to get down to business. Our desire to start something springs from a fear of the complications of reality; partly. Our inertia shows in impatience to get organized without bothering about aims; we fix upon them after we have elected officers.

Because efficient indolence is the prevailing American variety we are more than lucky to have a Sherwood Anderson with his special kind of dogged indolence. Anderson is very American of very American, but unlike most of us he is resolutely, overtly, and articulately still more Sherwood Anderson. That is not a very heroic identity to claim. It is an identity with an unusually broad streak of indolence. And he knows it. But it is a mark of extraordinary virtue to build his life and his stories on what he is, even if the building is somewhat confusing in architecture.

Sherwood Anderson is indolent as the Occidentals think the Orientals are. He likes to loll and dream. He likes to contemplate the welter that surrounds him. He doesn't like to select, reject, cut to uniformity and fit to established patterns. He can't be quite sure that the part that others trim away may not be the more valuable, or at any rate the significantly conditioning, part. His doubts and wonderings about the whole conglomeration furnish justification to him for continuing to flounder.

And strength does develop from his weakness.

If he tires by telling us lackadaisically matters we would understand well enough if they were briefly alluded to, he compensates us by revealing to us importance in what in our haste, or fear, or disgust, we had ignored. Hope and possibility declare themselves to us dimly, tentatively, as we follow one of his characters wanderingly through a sultry reminiscence.

*Tar* doesn't seem to me, on the whole, to show any falling off. I know one representative little boy, from reading it, rather better than I ever knew any little boy except myself as Sherwood Anderson makes me look back at myself.

The book is a charming and actuating communication of a live, simple, complex boy's hours and moments of gradual and partial orientation. *Tar*, the boy is not idealized, either up or down. He is not at all "a wonderful child". He is not always "a dear", or often "a real boy"; but he is lovable. And there is a little more than usual in him to admire, as well as much to pity and to smile at with scorn or forgiveness, according to our natures.

Most parents and teachers would be just as fatuous as ever after reading it. But I wish they'd read it.

And I wish, vainly no doubt, that critics who try to dispose of Anderson as a naturalistic novelist and story-teller would consider the passages about *Tar* wandering into the wooded lane and eating grass and being stung by a bee, and the passage about the farrowing sow.

If Sherwood Anderson is morbid in his attitude toward sex in this book, I can only say I wish my parents had been more morbid.

SIDNEY COX.

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THE ART OF THOUGHT. By Graham Wallas, M.A., D.Litt., Professor Emeritus of Political Science in the University of London. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 1926. Pp. 314.

The first nine chapters of this book consider how to think—how to make science. The remaining three show how to apply that art or business of thought to education, and to society or industry in general. That concluding practical part of the

book is superb: Professor Wallas plainly is courageous, tolerant, keenly observant, and widely experienced in social matters. The backbone of the first nine chapters is a summary of the psychology texts, and is almost as rickety—even though the author props up that defective theory of the authorities with many sound suggestions out of his own observations.

Wallas conveniently distinguishes four stages in each achievement of thought: (1) We make a voluntary effort to observe the things we hope may be pertinent, and try to classify or unify them (make them "science") by orthodoxly uncertain rules of "classification" or logic. (2) For a time, which may extend to years, we drop that effort, and let our minds or nervous systems assimilate ("Incubate") those observations unconsciously, or without interference by our uncertain rules of logic or mathematics—trusting that our minds will thus be able 'naturally', or unspoiled by those tricky rules of language or logic, to unify or solve the facts observed, and supply other pertinent (but at first omitted) observations. (3) *Perhaps* the solution or unification may then "click", flash, or rise involuntarily into consciousness—that being the "Illumination" stage. Poets and other thinkers with keenly observant minds (usually called imaginative minds) may voluntarily seek that click of unification by watching their "fringes" of consciousness, thereby seeing and then reinforcing the faintest, vaguest "Intimation" of the final quite conscious solution. (4) Even then, some pertinent facts may have been omitted, or some facts may not have been properly observed; so we must have a final stage of "Verification", in which with clear and careful consciousness we observe or experiment, and then unify—and modify the solution if such verified facts are much different. This final stage may immediately amount to a successful act of will—a happy, ideal or unified, event in living;—and obviously, it may develop into the first stage of an even wider solution, continuing on into a unified (i.e., sound) science or religion.

Plainly, there are three serious flaws in that "art of thought":—

First, logic, mathematics, or the set of rules for classifying observed facts, orthodoxly is uncertain, being itself an unsolved problem. That makes solutions of other problems at least



vague. Indeed, some 'thinkers' ultimately conclude that there can be no thinking—that the world is irrational, without order, unclassifiable.

Next, that orthodox uncertainty about the rules of thought makes it impossible to decide what facts are pertinent to a solution; and even worse, there is the analogous uncertainty (nowadays named relativity) as to whether we ever do observe (or know) exactly or finally any particular fact. The fourth stage, Verification, had to be added in order to handle after a fashion, just that doubt about the nature of facts themselves.

And finally, Wallas holds, with the conservative school of psychologists, that it is possible (as was mentioned in two of his four stages) voluntarily to control thinking in some respects—that the will is somewhat free, or can really create something (in this case, thought) out of nothing. The radical school of psychologists, the behaviorists, assert that there is no freedom of the will; and correctly show that if the will is somewhat free, then there can be no such thing as a solution, or unity, or science; for with such free will, something absolutely new may come into existence at any time, and that new thing is, by definition, not in that unity already reached, and hence contradicts its 'unity'. But Wallas joins the conservatives in correctly pointing out, what the abler behaviorists admit, that if the mind is absolutely determined or constituted by outside things, then there is no mind or thought [or science], but only those external material things. Thus, there is the final flaw or general irrationality, that by the orthodox rules each scientific school that deals with thought destroys the other's art or science—more completely than the fabulous Kilkenny cats (*Ency. Brit.*, xv, 794bc)

Wallas makes no claim to eliminate those technical flaws; but he deals practically with them surprisingly well—e.g., in his four stages of thinking. As a matter of fact, the flaws may be readily removed: the solutions of those orthodoxly unsolved problems is easy and simple (being largely a matter of clearing up those uncertainties in logic, mathematics, or language), but cannot properly be given here.

In the applied part of the book, Chapter X discusses the actual effect of our educational system upon the thinking abilities of the individual student from kindergarten on. Chapter XI considers the state's school machinery, emphasizing the fact that (comparatively speaking) such machinery is quite new, and hence much over-simplified and thus out of gear with the wide variations occurring among actual human beings. And his last chapter discusses teachers themselves, their profession and its relations to other professions, and the training suitable for that profession.

Wallas reaches so many tentative conclusions in this educational part that any brief summary of them would unavoidably be a caricature. As the science of psychology is so defective, and as application of the art of thought is so complex, his wisdom and experience show most plainly in the very inconclusiveness of those practical judgments. That inconclusiveness indicates just how shallow are the educational saviors who claim to have invented precisely the correct systems and method—even the so-called scientific method.

S. KLYCE

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THE LATER REALISM: A STUDY OF CHARACTERIZATION IN THE BRITISH NOVEL. By Walter L. Myers. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Pp. 173.

Some interest and familiarity in the problems of narrative technique are required for reading this compactly written book, whose chief value is its informing demonstration of the effects of the "newer psychology" upon the art of realistic characterization in the British novel. Something more than a definition of these effects, it implies a doubt of their further development in the art of fiction. Scientifically objective and rigidly systematic in presentation, it is very suggestive to the specialist but the general reader will probably find it tough reading, far from lucid. For an intelligent and comprehensive criticism of "neo-realism", it is a provocative prolegomenon.

## REVIEWS IN BRIEF

THE SELECTED POEMS OF ARTHUR DAVISON FICKE. With a Preface on the Nature of Poetry. New York: George H. Doran Company. Pp. 241.

Following a somewhat sententious preface defining poetry as "the dramatic shadow, the secret, of the heart's desire", Mr. Ficke's poems make one wish that he had omitted his prose introduction. Some of his poems—especially "An April Elegy", "Nocturne in a Library", and "The Middle Years"—have long been loved by discerning readers; all of them here collected have a high merit. True, they are slightly bookish and reminiscent; but at times there are livid moments of incandescence.

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SELECTED POEMS OF EDITH M. THOMAS. New York: Harper & Brothers. Pp. 247.

When we get tired of the fussings and strainings of some of our contemporaries in the art of poetry, it is a relief to rest back in the pillows and give oneself up to the quiet and gentle world of refinement which Miss Thomas's poems reveal. Like other American poets of the eighties and nineties, she was not spontaneous, she was not tense, she was not wilfully and perversely obscure; though she had little to say, that little was polite and decorous. But she was a careful craftsman, and loved Beauty. Not least of value in this edition is the informing and affectionate memoir by Miss Jessie B. Rittenhouse.

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THE OLD COUNTESS. By Anne Douglas Sedgwick. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 1927. Pp. 373.

Mrs. de Sélincourt's latest novel is as distinguished as *The Little French Girl*, but totally different in its effect. The former story combined brilliant characterization with subtle analysis of racial and social traits and contrasts. The latter intertwines the lives of an English artist and his wife, a beautiful young French woman, and an old French countess in a

plot so swift and tense and tragic that racial contrasts are only implicit. Here, too, there is masterly characterization; the old Countess, festive and sinister, on whose mad infatuation and jealousy the story hinges, is a figure audaciously conceived, delicately drawn. But the peculiar quality of this novel lies in the creation and sustaining of its tragic mood that gives it the unity of effect of some of the great short stories. And so perfectly is the mood of the story voiced by its setting that one fancies the author creating *The Old Countess* to express the feeling of the "menacing" blue sky of France, of the threatening cliffs, and of the great river Dordogne sweeping irresistibly to its flood.

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THE OXFORD BOOK OF EIGHTEENTH CENTURY VERSE. Chosen by David Nichol Smith. New York: Oxford University Press, American Branch. Pp. 713.

This beautifully bound collection of British poetry of the eighteenth century conveniently supplies a long-felt need. The selections have been made by a scholar of fine and catholic taste. As one reads them, he comes upon verses with a glittering ice-brilliance, reminders of the precise and polite age of ruffles and silver buckles. Now and again one catches the glint of moving wings of the newer beauty which was finally released in the poetry of Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley and Keats.

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EMERSON AND OTHERS. By Van Wyck Brooks. New York: E. P. Dutton & Company. Pp. 250.

Mr. Brooks shares with Mr. Lewis Mumford and Mr. Waldo Frank the position of expositor of America to Americans. In this book of reprinted sketches, he is not shown to as good advantage as in his earlier books, *The Ordeal of Mark Train* and *The Pilgrimage of Henry James*, but in the first sketch, "Emerson: Six Episodes", he has vividly and dramatically reconstructed the Emersonian group with sureness and happiness. Of the other seven sketches, that on "Randolph Bourne" is perhaps the most valuable, for it does justice to one of the most alert-minded critics in the present American renaissance.